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ABSTRACT

This publication is part of a series that reprints articles on a range of thematic issues published in the "Canadian Journal of Higher Education." This collection focuses on the relationship between the Canadian university and the state. After a preface and an introduction, an introductory monograph, "University-Government Relations in Canada: A Brief Review of the 'Traditional Literature'" (Glen A. Jones), summarizes some of the issues. This is followed by six articles from the journal: "Determining the University's Goals: The Setting of the Problem" (V:1, 1975) (Duncan D. Campbell); "Surviving the Crash: Canadian Universities in the Era of Disillusionment" (V:2, 1975) (Desmond Morton); "Universities, Governments, and the Public" (VI:1, 1976) (H. Ian McDonald); "University Presidents and the Politicians" (VII:1, 1977) (Ernest Sirluck); "University Presidents and Politicians" (VIII:3, 1978) (Claude T. Bissell); and "Governments and Universities" (XVIII:1, 1988) (Benjamin Levin and Nancy Sullivan). (Most articles contain references.) (SM)

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CENTRE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

CANADIAN SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF HIGHER EDUCATION

CHERD/CSSHE READER SERIES
Number 4

THE UNIVERSITY AND THE STATE: REFLECTIONS ON THE CANADIAN EXPERIENCE

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THE UNIVERSITY AND THE STATE: REFLECTIONS ON THE CANADIAN EXPERIENCE

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Alexander D. Gregor
Centre for Higher Education Research and Development
The University of Manitoba
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THE UNIVERSITY AND THE STATE:
REFLECTIONS ON THE CANADIAN EXPERIENCE

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Preface

The *CHERD/CSSHE Readers Series* represents a collaborative partnership of the Centre for Higher Education Research and Development and the Canadian Society for the Study of Higher Education. The series is intended to bring together the best articles that have been published in the *Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, in a range of thematic issues. It is hoped that the collection will provide a useful basis for the systematic examination of those issues, on the part of both researchers and practitioners; and that they will stimulate further investigation in those critically important areas of scholarship and practice.

Alexander D. Gregor
General Editor

Introduction

Following Alexander Gregor's invitation to edit a volume for his new Reader Series, I had the great joy of perusing all twenty-five volumes of *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education* and pondering the notion of a collection that would satisfy the objectives of this series as well as focus on an area of scholarship where I could at least pretend to have some degree of expertise. Since much of my recent writing has focused on issues related to the relationship between universities and government (or the state, to use the broader conceptualization) this theme was obviously in the back of my mind during my expedition through a quarter-century of higher education scholarship.

The Canadian Journal of Higher Education has published quite a number of articles on university-government relations, including discussions of financial relations, the federal-provincial interface in higher education policy, and in-depth analyses of specific policy developments, but I became quite enamored by a small group of papers that might be best categorized as reflective essays on broad questions related to the complex relationship between the university and state. Rather than the voice of disinterested scholarship, each of these papers represented an attempt by an individual in a leadership role in Canadian higher education to draw upon personal experience and reflection to discuss these relationships.

There are a number of good reasons to reintroduce these essays to contemporary readers. First, there are rather startling similarities between contemporary discussions and the views and concerns articulated by these authors (with the most recent contribution to this collection authored more than a decade ago, and with most of the articles appearing in the 1970s). While the examples may seem dated, and the language of discussion of the older articles is far from inclusive, many of the themes raised by these authors continues to play a central role in our thinking of Canadian universities and Canadian society.

There are differences, however, and one might suggest that the five articles included in this collection that were published between 1975 and 1978 provide insight into the particular problems and concerns associated with the post-1960s transition of higher education. Each of these authors was fully aware of the huge changes that had taken place in the relationship between universities and the state during that great decade of expansion, and each was, at the time of writing, attempting to come to grips with the new relationships that were emerging in an environment of financial restraint and decreasing public support. For Duncan Campbell, the new environment raised important questions concerning the goals of the universities, while three university presidents (Bissell, Macdonald, & Sirluck) pondered the changing formal and informal relationships between universities and governments and the role of the president in the "new politics" of Canadian higher education. Desmond Morton bluntly refers to this transition as a matter of "surviving the crash". In the same respect, the article by Benjamin Levin and Nancy Sullivan provides an indication of the perspectives of two government policy makers in the 1980s on very similar territory, and one might (somewhat creatively) read the article as a response to the very arguments articulated by university presidents a decade before.

A final reason for pulling these articles together is that each was written by a powerful figure in Canadian higher education. At the time of original publication, three of the authors had been university presidents (two during the 1970s, and Claude Bissell had completed a long term of office at the University of Toronto in 1971). Duncan Campbell was an early, important contributor to the higher education research literature and, as a Professor of Higher Education at the University of Alberta, played a role in the development of higher education as a field of study in Canada. Desmond Morton has worn many hats in Canadian higher education, and continues to contribute to this literature. Benjamin Levin and Nancy Sullivan held senior government policy positions in Manitoba, though their essay in this collection is based on personal observations, before moving back to university-based positions (Levin as a professor, Sullivan as a senior university administrator). As the work of influential figures in higher education, these essays provide us with a sense of how higher education leaders were framing the discussion of these issues. It is important to review and critically analyze these essays not just because of what the authors say, but also because of who the authors were at the time these works were published.

Following this introduction, the volume begins with a brief review of the literature on university-government relations in Canada designed to acquaint the reader with major themes and provide an extensive list of references to related literature. The six reprinted articles are simply organized in chronological order, beginning with Duncan Campbell's 1975 article and ending with Benjamin Levin and Nancy Sullivan's 1988 contribution.

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University–Government Relations in Canada: A Brief Review of the "Traditional" Literature

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The purpose of this paper is to review the literature on university-government relations in an attempt to demonstrate the traditional ways in which these relationships are viewed. The review will focus on three major issues or themes which subsume almost everything that has been written about these relationships: institutional autonomy and public policy; coordination; and funding. Readers will note that while the literature is discussed in terms of these three issues, the issues are directly related to each other and they overlap to a considerable degree.

I use the term "traditional" in this review both as a way of defining the narrow interface between the university and the state that dominates the Canadian literature on this topic, and as a way of limiting the scope of the review. I conclude by attempting to articulate the assumptions that underscore this "traditional" perspective, but it is important at the outset to realize that there are other ways of looking at these relationships which generally involve broadening the unit of analysis to include other areas of interaction between universities and government. For example, one can look at university-government relations in terms of the activities of individual faculty (Jones, 1993; Unrau & McDonald, 1995), or the work of particular pressure groups (Jones, 1995). Slaughter and Leslie (1997) have recently studied Canada as part of a four-nation comparative analysis of recent shifts in government policy for higher education and the analysis of how these policy approaches have led to a change in the power and influence relationships within institutions of higher education in favour of what they refer to as "academic capitalism." All of these studies represent an attempt to expand our understanding of university-government relations by looking beyond the traditional perspective discussed in this brief review.

Institutional Autonomy and Public Policy

> There are, I think, six features of modern universities that are continuous with their mediaeval counterparts and that have always been present whenever the university amounted to anything worth having. These are its independence, its neutrality and impartiality, its bookishness, its concern for the advancement of knowledge, its interest in the passing on of knowledge critically, and, finally, its role as a cultural centre. Indeed, I think that these features might be described as the absolute presuppositions of the university as an institution in R.G. Collingwood's sense of the notion. I mean here that if you deny or remove any of these things, while you may have an institution, you do not have a university-like one (Winchester, 1986, p. 271).

The notion of institutional autonomy is generally regarded as a central concept within the idea of the university. If the university is to fulfill its basic objectives in terms of the dissemination of knowledge and the development of new knowledge, then the institution must be free to act without interference from external authority. It must be autonomous if it is to protect the academic freedom of its faculty, to protect them from the changing whims of external political power or religious authority.

In the early history of the Canadian university it was the church which represented the greatest threat to institutional autonomy. For almost two hundred years, Canadian higher education was dominated by the work of denominational institutions. From the Jesuit colleges of the 1600s until the emergence of non-denominational universities in the 19th century, denominational teaching institutions were the only source of higher learning in the territory that was to become Canada. These early institutions were founded and supported by the church, relying on tuition fees, donations, and regular grants from the parent church for their operating revenues. Officials were often appointed by the church, and there is little doubt that the church exercised considerable indirect influence over the activities in the classroom. Some institutions required potential graduates to swear their adherence to the religious doctrines of the denomination (Somers, 1966), and even in the twentieth century, some religious institutions, such as the Baptist Acadia University, ignored Darwin's theory of evolution because it was "considered anti-Christian" (Moody, 1989, p. 150).

There was little direct government involvement in higher education until the late 18th and early 19th centuries, when disputes between and within denominational groups, the influence of United Empire Loyalists, and a fear of American republicanism began to politicize Canadian higher education. As Harris (1976) has noted, one of the primary reasons for establishing postsecondary institutions in both English and French Canada was the preservation of traditions through cultural education. Questions began to emerge as to which traditions should be dominant and how should the future leaders of the society be educated. The desire on the part of the government of Nova Scotia to show political support for the Church of England led to a series of regular grants to a church college beginning in 1787 (Vroom, 1941), even though the government's attitude towards education was one of "apathy and neglect" (Somers, 1966, p.28). The granting of an independent, non-denominational charter to the University of Toronto in 1849 was, according to Axelrod, "a solution to the competing religious demands of Anglicans and their opponents" (1982, p. 12). The fights taking place within and between denominational institutions in Eastern and Central Canada had a direct impact on the development of universities in Western Canada, where the notion of a single, secular, publicly-funded, provincial university was viewed as a method of avoiding these problems. The creation of the University of Manitoba in 1877 represented, according to Morton, an attempt to avoid "the long shadow of Bishop John Strachen", and the denominational battles that were occurring in the East (1979, p. 7).

The increasing government interest in and support of higher education raised the question of how these publicly-funded institutions should be governed. There were occasional instances of government interference, such as when the Minister of Education in Ontario appointed a professor to the University of Toronto without consulting the President of the University (Harris, 1984), under the assumption that there should be some element of government control over a government-funded institution.

The University of Toronto Act of 1906 established a structural framework that was quickly adopted by the four provincial universities in the West, and eventually adopted by almost every university in the country (Campbell, 1985). The Royal Commission which authored the University of Toronto Act studied institutions of higher education in Great Britain and the United States and their final proposal was strongly influenced by the university governance systems of these two nations. The Commission reported:

> We have examined the governmental systems of other State universities upon this continent and have found a surprising unanimity of view upon the propriety of divorcing them from the direct superintendence of political powers (Alexander, 1906, p. 276).

Their final report recommended the establishment of a bicameral governing structure with authority divided between a board of governors, the corporate board based on the American tradition, and a senate, an academic body based on the British tradition. The provincial involvement in the internal governance of the institution was limited to the selection and appointment of board members, and the board, rather than government, would be responsible for ensuring that the university fulfilled its broad objectives.

This basic governance structure was based on the notion of the university as an independent body, and for the first half of the twentieth century this independence was generally respected and the relationships between universities and governments were relatively harmonious. Universities were seldom the subject of legislative debate, in part because provincial grants were modest and the institutions educated only a small percentage of the population. The university ". . . rested in a backwater, out of the mainstream of life and action, little exposed to 'the roar of bargain and battle' " (Corry, 1970, p. 102). Neatby, in his review of the history of university-government relations, argues that this period of harmony was the result of a common understanding of what a university should do:

> Provincial governments and university authorities were in basic agreement on the function of universities and on how they could best achieve their objectives. Universities trained the children of the provincial elites; they served as a finishing school for their daughters and prepared their sons for admission to the liberal professions. These social functions were understood by governments and by university officials; there were no major confrontations over admissions, over the course content or over student discipline because both groups shared the same social values. Cabinet ministers and members of the Boards of Governors might belong to different parties but they were all men of substance with similar views of the social order (1987, p. 34).

There were certainly disagreements between universities and governments, especially over the level of government grants, but these concerns were usually expressed in a private forum and drew little public attention. Generally speaking, the independence of the university was respected because the consensus on the role of the university "made overt government intervention unnecessary" (Neatby, 1987, p. 35).

This relationship began to change after the Second World War, when the consensus on the role and function of the university shifted dramatically. The change was evolutionary, though the effect was clearly revolutionary. The First World War catalyzed an increasing interest in scientific research, and universities began to assume a primary role in a policy area that was viewed as significant to the nation (Thistle, 1966). The War even shifted the focus of private denominational institutions. The implicit separation between church and state became blurred as many religious universities, like their non-denominational peers, threw their support behind the national effort and began to perceive their activities as contributing to the social development of the nation as a whole (Keifer & Pierson, 1989; Moody, 1989). Qualified World War II veterans entered the universities in large numbers as a result of federal policies on veteran's benefits and a growing perception that postsecondary education represented an important tool for post-war industrialization and economic expansion. The revolution took the form of a tremendous growth in enrolment and in the role of the university in the public policy arena.

Corry eloquently termed the essence of this change as the university's transition "from private domain to public utility", the movement from the university as "nobody's business" to the university as "everybody's business". The Sheffield Report, released in 1955, predicted a dramatic increase in the number of students who would be knocking on the doors of Canadian universities, and Canadian universities requested and received federal and additional provincial support to pay for the increased demand. The launching of

Sputnik in 1957 led to demands for increased expenditures on education and research, the new battlefronts of the cold war. The general view that there was a relationship between higher education and economic growth was beginning to receive support from economic research. Human capital theory provided an argument that higher education should be regarded as a state investment, a view strongly supported by the Economic Council of Canada in 1965. As Rea has suggested, the implication for government policy was clear: "greater emphasis should be placed on expanding investment in education relative to investment in other assets" (Rea, 1987, p. 162). Higher education became a matter of public policy, and universities became public utilities.

Universities generally welcomed, or at the very least accepted, their new role as public utilities, in large part because government grants provided the institutions with a considerable degree of flexibility and supported both program and physical expansion (Horn, 1984). However, with the growing dependence on government grants in the 1960s and the change in the funding situation in the early 1970s, when governments began to look for ways of reducing or limiting their expenditures on higher education, the new role of the university as a public utility began to assume negative connotations.

The issue which began to emerge, though it has never strayed too far below the surface of university-government relations, was the apparent contradiction between the notion of institutional autonomy, often viewed as a basic presupposition of the university in the Canadian context, and the notion of the university as a public utility, a tool of public policy. This basic dilemma is the root question in much of what has been written about university-government relations in Canada.

It is not a problem which is unique to Canadian higher education. Kogan notes that a variety of arrangements have emerged concerning the relationships between universities and governments, each of which can be discussed in terms of a broad continuum between two extreme models. The "classic" model represents the notion of the independent, self-regulating institution. The institution may receive grants from external sources, but it is completely free to determine what it will do and how it will be done. The university is "thus responsive to external influences only on its own intellectual and moral recognisances" (1988, p.7). The second model is that of an institution which is dependent on external sponsorship, and whose basic objectives are determined by its sponsor, either directly or through the nature of the funding and organizational arrangements. Institutional independence is limited to working within the guidelines or conditions established by the sponsor, though the university is left "to determine issues of method in teaching, research and scholarship" (p. 7). Given these two extreme models and the range of arrangements that fall along the continuum, Kogan argues that "the boundary between the state and higher education . . . is forever being negotiated" (p. 6).

In Canada in the 1960s, part of this negotiation process involved the reform of university government, the internal structures and processes through which universities make decisions. Faculty and students were demanding a greater role in institutional governance, and their arguments often implicitly, if not explicitly, questioned the self-regulating capacity of the institution. If the university was to remain independent, if it was to avoid the potential interference associated with its new role in public policy, it had to find a generally accepted structure for self-regulation. Whalley, writing in 1964, argued: "universities must be effectively governed so that they can preserve their life, their existence, and their reason for existing" (p. vii).

The reform of institutional governance was guided by the publication of a report on the subject commissioned by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) and the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT). The Duff-Berdahl report, entitled *University Government in Canada* (1966), encouraged institutions to develop a more collegial approach to governance within the traditional bicameral system. The report recommended greater faculty participation on both the senate and the board, student representation on the senate, and cross-representation between the two bodies so that each would be more aware of the work of the other.

Most universities moved in this direction, in some cases, through the appointment of students to the board, even farther than the report recommended. The University of Toronto adopted a different approach. Based on the belief that bicameralism represented an artificial division of responsibilities and involved a "double innocence" since neither body was fully aware of the work and concerns of the other (Bissell, 1968, pp. 141–152), the University created a unicameral structure where authority over both administrative and academic matters was vested in a single body, the Governing Council. While there were certainly differences by institution, almost every Canadian university changed its governance structure, changes which provincial governments accepted by passing revisions to legislative charters.

Since the reform of university governance, the discussion of institutional autonomy and public policy has focused on a variety of other issues, though there seems to be a considerable degree of consensus on three basic points. The first is that Canadian universities continue to exercise a relatively high level of autonomy in terms of their internal affairs (Bercuson, Bothwell & Granatstein, 1984; Cutt, 1990; Cutt & Dobell, 1990; Horn, 1984; Jones, 1991b, 1996; McDaniel, 1996; Ross, 1976; Skolnik, 1991; Skolnik & Jones, 1992; Winchester, 1984). The second is that higher education is, and should continue to be, an important element within public policy, since universities contribute to the social and economic development of the nation (Bissell, 1968; Corry, 1970; Horn 1984; Jones, 1996). Finally, provincial government influence over the internal activities of the university is increasing (Cameron, 1991; Horn, 1984; Jones, 1991b, 1996; Leslie, 1980; Skolnik, 1991). Given these three points of consensus, the discussion of university-government relations in terms of the issue of institutional autonomy and public policy appears to involve two different perspectives on this relationship.

The first involves what might be termed an "institutional" perspective. Contributors to this body of work tend to use the institution as the basic unit of analysis in an attempt to comment on or study the relationship between public policy, the institution, and institutional autonomy. One of the common arguments that emerges from this literature is that public policy is well served by a high level of institutional autonomy.

Bissell (1968), Corry (1970), and Horn (1984) are among those who argue that for the institution to continue to contribute to the society in which it functions, public policy must emphasize institutional autonomy. For Bissell, institutional autonomy contributes to and supports academic freedom, and an institution which lacks autonomy will not be free "to stand back and look objectively and critically at society without giving thought to whether the results will be immediately relevant or practical" (1968, p. 229). Institutional autonomy does not mean that the university should be isolated from society, or that it should not be scrutinized by government. The university must be accountable and "make its decisions in terms of the general welfare and coherent pattern within the state" (p. 233). On the other hand, the university must be free to govern itself, to determine how it can best serve public interests.

Corry argues that "Canadian universities cannot and will not retain their autonomy for their essential purposes unless Canadian society sees that autonomy as vital for the welfare of our country and is fully apprised of what is needed to secure it" (1970, p. 79). The partnership between universities and governments is an uneasy alliance where governments have all of the power, but where universities, if they are to fulfill their role within society, must have considerable freedom. He argues that the only true security for independence is public opinion, and that universities must be prepared to continually educate and remind the public that the goals of society and of the university are complementary.

Horn (1984) reviews the history of the relationship between government funding and institutional autonomy. He finds that while governments have had an increasing influence on university activities they have generally respected institutional autonomy, but he warns that this respect can disappear quickly in times of financial crisis: "cost-conscious educational planners are prone to see institutional autonomy, even the present incomplete form, as one hindrance to the achievement of full employment and economic growth" (p. 11).

Winchester's (1984) case study of the attempt by forces within the Government of Alberta to reduce institutional autonomy by centralizing authority provides a direct example of the reality of Horn's warning. In the mid-1970s, government officials proposed that the universities should be combined with other educational institutions and functions under the auspices of a centrally coordinated adult education system. Designed to facilitate manpower planning, the proposal would decrease the autonomy of the provincial universities. The proposal was eventually abandoned, even though the universities "had little direct access to the corridors of legislative power" (p. 48). The battle was won, according to Winchester, because the universities, assisted by the work of the independent professions, such as law, architecture, and medicine, "mounted a campaign of academic argument, letter writing, lobbying and personal intervention at the highest possible levels in defense of academic freedom . . ." (p. 51). The substance of the arguments impressed the new Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower who withdrew the proposal.

In summary, the "institutional" perspective suggests that institutional autonomy is directly linked to the concept of academic freedom. Autonomy is necessary if academic freedom is to be maintained. Public policy must recognize that institutional autonomy is essential if universities are to continue to play an important role. At the same time, it is recognized that institutional autonomy is only possible if it is accepted or tolerated by government. Universities must continue to be wary of the potential threat, and ensure that politicians and the general public are aware of the importance of autonomy to the public role of the institution.

The second perspective on the issue of institutional autonomy and public policy involves what might be termed a societal or public policy perspective. Contributors to this body of literature agree that institutional autonomy is important, but they argue that institutional autonomy does not necessarily ensure that the institution will continue to serve the public interest. There is a considerable diversity of viewpoints within this body of work, in contrast to the relative homogeneity of arguments associated with the "institutional" perspective.

For Bercuson, Bothwell and Granatstein (1984), the transition from private domain to public utility represented the systematic devaluation of Canadian higher education. They argue that in adopting their new role, universities voluntarily turned away from quality and elitism in favour of government grants associated with expansion. Funding, and the basic relationship with government, became a "numbers game" emphasizing quantity of input. Universities became increasingly influenced by their political paymasters, and politicians began to view universities as political tools by building new institutions in local communities as a method of creating jobs, thus unnecessarily duplicating expensive services.

> Political interference, sometimes as subtle persuasion, sometimes as direct pressure, has also had an impact on programs and quality. The politicians wanted more voters' children to go to university; the universities lowered entrance standards. The politicians wanted more "visible" results from the money they were pouring into universities, more "bang for buck"; the universities stressed the vocational training part of higher education and deemphasized the task that must lay at the very core of university–teaching people how to think (p. 149).

In their discussion of the reform of university governance, a chapter entitled "Internal Democracy and the Road to Hell", they argue that the reforms created a structure dominated by elected faculty, chosen by their popularity rather than the quality of their scholarship, and students, who may be reluctant to increase the standards of their programs. The result was a governance structure which priorized mediocrity over excellence.

Paquet (1988) argues that there is a "crisis of confidence" in Canadian higher education. Politicians and the citizens they serve are no longer confident that the university is using public funds efficiently, able to adapt quickly to changing circumstances, or producing a quality product. The problem is that the higher education "enterprise" is poorly managed. He argues that government can play a role in stimulating the managerial capacity of the university: "to scheme virtuously to get the enterprise to produce more per dollar; and to do it without, at the same time, introducing additional rigidities that would make it impossible for the postsecondary education enterprise to do its job" (p. 10).

Cameron (1992) argues that three values have played a central role when questions concerning the organization of Canadian universities have emerged: corporate autonomy, state support, and academic self-government. He suggests that postwar expansion and the reform of university governance enhances two of these "traditional" values, state support and academic self-government, while it constrained corporate autonomy:

> University organization no longer optimizes the three values of corporate autonomy, state support, and academic self-government. A new balance is necessary, or the squeeze on autonomy seems destined to continue or get worse. Increased state control facing collectivized faculties looks like a sure recipe for even greater centralization and routinization. The outcome would almost certainly be a loss of creativity and institutional adaptability (p. 9).

One solution to this problem, according to Cameron, is to strengthen the role of governing boards, especially in terms of the board's ability to make strategic decisions.

Arthurs (1987), in the keynote address at a conference entitled "Governments and Higher Education – The Legitimacy of Intervention", discusses the formal, legalistic legitimacy of the provincial governance of higher education. He argues that there is no clear conceptual definition of legitimacy, but suggests that one must regard government intervention as inevitable given the universities' tremendous dependence on public funding, and that this intervention "is by no means wrong in principle" (p. 14). He suggests that universities must, through political action, define boundaries of government intervention in order to protect and support free enquiry.

Cutt (1990) suggests that there is an "expectations gap", a gap between what governments want and what they think universities are doing. He argues that much, if not all, of this gap is a function of the failure of universities to provide governments with useful and meaningful information on their activities. Writing from a public policy perspective, Cutt concludes that universities should voluntarily develop new methods of reporting to government in an attempt to avoid the possible dangers associated with the growing momentum for more direct government intervention. New accountability mechanisms, such as prospective budget submissions, retrospective reporting, and inter-institutional resource allocation criteria, will allow universities to clearly demonstrate that they are important, efficient enterprises, and allow them to compete for scarce public resources. He presents a framework for accountability designed to promote these basic goals, and concludes that:

> . . . greater accountability can ensure continued autonomy and contribute to improved funding prospects. In brief, the taxpayer deserves a better explanation than currently offered of what universities accomplish with the

> resources made available, and why some departures from competitive market mechanisms in the allocation and management of those resources may be useful. Institutions which live off annual allocations cannot afford the luxury of insisting on being taken on faith at all times (p. x).

The sparse literature on accountability in Canadian higher education stands in sharp contrast to the virtual "accountability industry" that has emerged in other jurisdictions, especially Australia, the United States, and the United Kingdom since the early 1980s. While there are indications of increasing interest on the part of provincial governments in strengthening accountability arrangements, the term "accountability" is seldom defined. John Dennison's (1995) analysis of accountability and Canadian community colleges raises many interesting questions concerning this emerging area of discussion, and Skolnik's (1994) analysis of a review of university accountability in Ontario represents an intriguing case study.

There is a considerable diversity of viewpoints within this body of work which I have called the public policy perspective on institutional autonomy, ranging from the suggestion that universities have been far too responsive to the perceived needs of government and society (Bercuson, Bothwell, & Granatstein, 1984) to the suggestion that universities have been unable to respond appropriately to changing societal needs (Paquet, 1988). The common theme throughout this body of work is that institutional autonomy cannot be equated with institutional success. Academic self-government can constrain corporate autonomy (Cameron, 1992) or, by valuing democratic participation over meritocratic principles, result in the devaluation of the traditional ideals of the university (Bercuson, Bothwell, & Granatstein, 1984).

In summary, the "institutional perspective" on autonomy suggests that public policy must recognize the importance of institutional autonomy. The independence of the university is under constant threat, and universities must ensure that other parties understand why institutional autonomy must be maintained. The "public policy" perspective suggests that while autonomy is important, independence is not an end in itself, it is a function of public confidence that universities are continuing to act in the best interests of higher education and/or the broader society. The "institutional perspective" tends to involve a philosophical or historical discussion of institutional autonomy, while the "public policy" perspective tends to be based on concepts borrowed from public administration and applied to higher education systems as a whole.

Coordination

Broadly defined, coordination refers to the structure, processes and policies through which governments attempt to regulate or direct higher education. Discussions of government coordination tend to involve a system perspective, since coordination tends to involve a group of public policies and structures dealing with a higher education system as a whole.

In the United States, the state governance of postsecondary education has evolved to include diverse and often complex structures for the regulation and coordination of state and private institutions. The historical development of these structures has been discussed from a number of different perspectives, but there is considerable agreement that the tremendous expansion of American universities and colleges in the twentieth century catalyzed a movement towards state-level coordination in order to provide for the orderly growth of public institutions (Berdahl, 1971; Millard, 1976; Millett, 1984; Perkins, 1973). While there had been considerable discussion of state coordination and planning in the 1930s and 1940s (President's Commission on Higher Education, 1947), the "real pressure for statewide coordination of public higher education began in the 1950s and accelerated in the 1960s" (Millard, 1976, p. 9).

In the early and mid-1950s, the Association of American Universities and the Ford Foundation both sponsored detailed studies of higher education governance. The former created a Commission on Financing Higher Education which published a final report (1952) and a separate staff report on the financing of American higher education (Millett, 1952). The Commission attempted to define the role of the federal and state governments in higher education, and to argue that state governments should avoid unnecessarily strict controls of public institutions. The Ford Foundation sponsored a study group called the Committee on Government and Higher Education which published its final report in 1959. The Committee addressed the question of the appropriate relationship between state officials and state institutions and argued that while the state must be free to determine the level of public funding, the governing board of the institution must be free to determine how these funds should be spent. The Committee was concerned with the growing level of state control of higher education and urged institutions to take the initiative in creating voluntary coordinating bodies.

State government planning and coordination of higher education was the subject of a study by Glenny (1959) involving the examination of coordinating agencies and boards in a sample of eleven states. He analyzed the way in which each central state agency performed four principal functions: planning, the allocation of programs, the determination of budget needs, and the determination of need in terms of physical facilities. While he was impressed with the methods used to determine operating budgets, he was critical of state planning activities and information-gathering systems. Glenny noted that many states were moving towards the development of coordinating agencies instead of central governing boards, but suggested that both types of structures had inherent problems in terms of long-range planning.

Perhaps the most widely cited work on state governance of higher education in the United States was conducted by Berdahl (1971), with the support of the American Council on Education. Berdahl argued that university autonomy and academic freedom are not the same thing, and that state governments should be able to coordinate the activities of publicly-funded state institutions. He suggested that all public institutions are coordinated, whether by a specialized agency or by a governor, but that a specialized agency was in a better position to coordinate institutions and respect a high degree of institutional autonomy. Berdahl also developed a typology of state coordinating and governing boards, according to the level of authority exercised by such bodies.

In contrast to the American situation, the movement towards provincial coordination of higher education in Canada did not begin until the 1960s. While 15 American states had statewide governing boards, exercising some degree of executive authority over the state system, and two had some form of advisory coordinating board as early as 1939, and more than half of the states had created some form of governing or coordinating board by 1959 (Berdahl, 1971), no such body existed in a Canadian province until after 1960. The basic reasons for coordination were the same in both countries. Higher education was becoming an increasingly complex and expensive area of provincial public policy, and there was a perceived need for the development of structures and mechanisms designed to ensure that governments would be able to exercise some control or influence over the growing university systems.

The movement towards provincial coordination was influenced by the changing role of the federal government. In 1951 the federal government began to provide direct grants to the universities, allocated using a formula based on provincial population and university enrolment, in response to the report of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences (Kwavnick, 1975). These grants were later increased in response to the Sheffield Report on enrolment and the recommendations of a national conference on "Canada's Crisis in Higher Education"(Bissell, 1957). In 1967 the system of direct grants was replaced by a system of grants to the provinces tied to provincial expenditures on higher education. The federal government continued to provide direct support for university research, but the provinces assumed complete control over the allocation of operating and capital grants. Universities became dependents of the provincial governments.

As Neatby (1987) has noted, provincial government relations with the universities had been relatively harmonious and non-bureaucratic. Universities usually submitted requests for funding directly to the premier who, in consultation with the treasurer, determined the level of the grant. As the level and complexity of requests increased, premiers began to turn to other government officials and advisors for advice on how to deal with the growing higher education system.

In Ontario, for example, the responsibility for allocating grants was transferred to the Minister of Education who, in 1951, appointed a part-time consultant to review universities requests (Beard, 1983). In 1956 the Premier appointed a committee composed of officials from the ministry of education and the office of the provincial treasurer to advise on higher education, and this government committee structure was expanded and formalized two years later with the creation of the University Committee.

In the beginning, these committees were wholly composed of ministers and bureaucrats operating with little in the way of research or secretarial support. They were essentially reactive bodies, scrutinizing the requests and expenditures of the publicly-funded institutions (Axelrod, 1982, p. 91). Universities became concerned with the composition of these committees, and the government eventually responded by appointing members of the broader community, to the new Advisory Committee on University Affairs in 1961, and members of the academic committee nominated by the university presidents and by the Ontario Federation of University Faculty Associations, to the new Committee on University Affairs in 1964 (Beard, 1983). The Committee on University Affairs was viewed as a "buffer" body between the independent universities and the government, an advisory body reviewing the needs of the province and making recommendations on policy to the new Ministry of University Affairs.

By the time the Duff-Berdahl report was released in 1966, there were government committees functioning in all multi-university provinces except New Brunswick. While the task force was primarily concerned with institutional governance, it did make a number of observations on provincial coordination. Duff and Berdahl argued that the provinces were justified in seeking an increased role in the coordination of higher education since Canadian universities are essentially public institutions. Government committees should strive to occupy "the middle ground where government and university needs can be dealt with sympathetically and ultimately reconciled" (p. 80), but in order to be effective in this role they must include academic representation, have adequate research staff, and begin to develop long-range master plans. They also recommended that provincial universities create formal voluntary coordinating agencies, because "the universities' best hope for maintaining maximum independence of government control lies in their ability to take stands on issues, based on careful and objective studies" (p. 75).

Eventually, nine of the ten provinces created some form of committee, commonly referred to as an intermediary body, to deal with higher education. In the four western provinces, the policy of a single university was abandoned in favour of system expansion and greater decentralization, and intermediary bodies were created to advise the provinces on the development of the new multi-university systems. Newfoundland, with a single provincial university, was the only province which did not create an intermediary body for the university sector.

Perhaps the most detailed study of the provincial coordination of Canadian higher education (at least until David Cameron's broad analysis of higher education policy was published in 1992) was conducted by the Commission on the Relations Between Universities and Governments (Hurtubise & Rowat, 1970). The report of the Commission began with a broad discussion of the history, function, nature and social importance of the university, and drew a distinction between university autonomy and academic freedom. The Commission argued that individual universities were working in isolation, and using institutional autonomy as a defense for a general unwillingness to cooperate with other provincial institutions. But even if universities were able or willing to create structures for voluntary cooperation, it would still be inappropriate for these bodies to determine public policy for higher education. Hurtubise and Rowat were also critical of provincial university commissions which often operated in secret, without consultation, and used inappropriate financial procedures. The solution, according to the Commission, was to create University Co-ordinating Commissions (UCCs) which would be responsible for creating and maintaining master plans in cooperation with government and the universities. UCCs would be created by provincial statute and assigned executive powers based on their "need to plan, to co-ordinate and review proposed programs" (p. 113).

The Hurtubise and Rowat report was immediately disowned by its original sponsors: the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, the Canadian Association of University Teachers, and two student organizations. The sponsors believed that the report understated the importance of institutional autonomy as a protection for academic freedom and overstated the role of the state in terms of regulating or coordinating Canadian universities. Little or no action was taken in response to the recommendations contained in the report (Fiorino, 1976).

A small body of work has focused on the role and function of intermediary bodies in the provincial coordination of higher education. This literature tends to be either descriptive, involving a review of the mandates of the various bodies, or prescriptive, involving the author(s)'s views on what such bodies should do. The descriptive literature, including overviews by Beard (1983), G. Clarke (1981), Sheffield (1974), Sibley (1982), Smith (1984), and Trotter and Carrothers (1974), generally leads to the conclusion that intermediary bodies play an important role by providing advice to government, and by separating the universities from the political arena, thus assisting in the protection of institutional autonomy.

Naimark (1979) offers some general comments on intermediary bodies based on a premise that "the optimum relationship between the state and the universities which it supports has yet to be identified" (p. 29). He discusses three aspects of the relationship: the problem of context, the problems of concepts, and the problems of strategy. Two of his notions are particularly interesting in the context of this review. He suggests that intermediary bodies suffer from "plasticity", which he defines as "a susceptibility to being molded, or . . . the ready assumption of new shape" (p. 34). Secondly, he suggests that these bodies suffer from "complexities of demarcation" (p. 37), since universities often interact with a variety of government agencies aside from their formal contact with the department responsible for higher education. He concludes that intermediary bodies should be advisory and have a strategy of maximum flexibility.

Blauer (1979) argues that only the provincial legislatures can be held responsible for the overall development of the provincial higher education system. Intermediary bodies should coordinate the university system in each province, and act as an interpreter of the university system for the general public.

There has been only one research study which attempted to determine whether the existence of an intermediary body actually makes a difference within a provincial system.

Since British Columbia had an intermediary body and Alberta did not, Southern and Dennison (1985) tried to determine whether the presence of an intermediary body made a difference in university-government relations. Interviews were conducted with university and government officials in order to review five policy areas: autonomy, advocacy, access, budget, and planning. The authors were unable to isolate the impact of the intermediary body from an array of political variables, but suggested that the individuals they interviewed emphasized the characteristics of decision-makers over structure in terms of impact on university-government relations.

Skolnik and Jones (1992), in their comparative study of state/provincial coordination in the United States and Canada, note that while American states continue to emphasize the role of statewide boards, a number of Canadian provinces have abolished intermediary bodies. British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan abandoned their intermediary bodies in favour of direct government coordination. New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island abolished their provincial intermediary bodies when they established the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC), a regional intermediary body which attempts to coordinate higher education in the maritimes and which provides advice to the three provincial governments. The creation of the new Nova Scotia Council on Higher Education, which came to assume the central role in the broad restructuring of Nova Scotia's university sector, probably weakened the role of the regional intermediary and the MPHEC has recently been reorganized. Manitoba has abandoned its Universities Grants Commission and is currently experimenting with a postsecondary council with a mandate to review the activities of both the university and community college sectors. In 1996, Ontario abolished the Ontario Council on University Affairs, though a recent panel review has recommended the creation of an advisory body on broad postsecondary policy (Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education, 1996). These new initiatives seem to suggest that intermediary bodies may be experiencing a renaissance.

Aside from obvious differences in terms of the existence and role of intermediary bodies, provincial governments appear to employ a fairly similar approach to the coordination of universities. This approach involves four characteristics.

The first characteristic is that provincial governments have limited the number of universities by rationing the authority to grant degrees (Skolnik, 1987). Provincial governments have generally refrained from granting the authority to private institutions, except for denominational institutions whose authority is limited to religious degrees. Alberta appears to be the only province that is actively experimenting with the accreditation of private degree-granting institutions (Jones, 1996; Rae, 1996).

The second and closely related characteristic is that provincial governments have generally discouraged competition between institutions. As Skolnik and Jones (1992) have noted, "the (Canadian) penchant for order relative to freedom has led them to shun not only competition from a private higher education sector, but also competition within the public sector" (p. 133). While some have argued for greater competition within provincial systems of higher education, the "emphasis in public policy has been on establishing networks of institutions of approximately equivalent standards" (p. 126), though recent policy changes in Alberta and Ontario seem to suggest an increasing interest in experimenting with modest forms of competition within higher education systems.

The third characteristic is that provincial governments have generally accepted, or at the very least tolerated, a relatively high level of institutional autonomy (Cutt, 1990; Cutt & Dobell, 1990; Horn, 1984; Jones, 1991b; Skolnik, 1991; Skolnik & Jones, 1992; Winchester, 1984). There are a number of assumptions on which the provincial government respect for institutional autonomy is based, perhaps best summarized in the following passage from a discussion paper prepared by the Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities:

> 1. The tools of central planning are neither operative nor feasible:
>   (a) Centralized manpower planning does not work; it is confounded by unpredictable developments in the economy and labour force such as business cycles, technological change, substitution, social change (e.g., the entry of women into the labour force).
>   (b) One of the principal raisons d'être of universities — the advancement of knowledge — cannot be centrally planned. By its very nature, it follows the "path least travelled by". If one had taken a poll of leading public figures in the 1940s, bio-technology and micro-electronics would not have been foremost in their priorities.
>   (c) Systems allocating students to programs and institutions do not work well. Students are intelligent consumers; they will seek out what they perceive to be in their best interest just as earlier in this century they sought out psychology, economics, sociology and so forth in place of the traditional classical studies. The only limitation they will accept is selection based on merit.
> 2. Independent universities are as capable as any organization of responding to the market in which they operate; they are as capable as any central agency can be of identifying areas of specialization upon which to build and operations of marginal utility from which to draw resources. They are more sensitive to local conditions. They know best how to maintain balance among the disciplines against the pull of the market. Their response will be quicker and more timely if unimpeded by central planning.
> 3. Public accountability can be achieved through public representation on governing boards, statutory provisions under which universities are required to submit statistical and financial data to the Ministry, and through the use of a funding mechanism which relates the level of funding provided to objective measures such as enrolment.
> 4. Universities have a special place in the public view as a source of independent thought and criticism. This could be impaired if they were operated directly as government agencies (1980, pp. 1–3).

This is not to suggest that there is a consensus as to the effectiveness of institutional control of higher education. There have been calls for more centralized control, but provincial governments continue to demonstrate a relatively high respect for the independent authority of institutions. Royce (1997) has conducted a very interesting case study of provincial coordination issues in Ontario, focusing on the question of why the provincial government in that province has not moved further in terms of central coordination and system planning.

Finally, governments have adopted an approach to the coordination of universities that might be termed "managerialism at the margins" (Jones, 1990b). Most of the funds provided to universities by provincial governments take the form of unconditional grants to support the general operating requirements of the institutions. At the same time, provincial governments have attempted to regulate or coordinate specific policy areas, to manage the margins of higher education policy. Provincial governments have increasingly turned to targeted funding mechanisms as a method of managing or regulating a specific policy area (Cameron, 1991; Skolnik, 1991). There is little doubt that the universities dislike targeted funding arrangements, in large part because they view such programs as infringing on institutional autonomy. Given the current funding situation however, universities have often turned towards targeted grants, which represent new income above their traditional operating grants, as a method of increasing their administrative and financial flexibility. From the government perspective, targeted grants represent an attractive method of ensuring that institutions address priority policy areas (Jones, 1991b; Mullins, 1992).

While it is generally argued that there are common themes that emerge from the analysis of provincial coordination, a number of authors have expanded the context of this discussion. David Cameron's comprehensive analysis of university-government relations in Canada demonstrates the importance of looking at provincial coordination from a federal perspective (1991). By stepping back from the more traditional provincial perspective, Cameron clearly establishes how higher education policy initiatives have often led to new experimental mechanisms in federal-provincial relations. According to Cameron, the common themes that emerge from the analysis of provincial policy are often a function of provincial governments learning from each other by avoiding initiatives viewed as mistakes in another jurisdiction and emulating policy approaches viewed as successful.

Researchers have also broadened the scope of analysis even further to discuss Canadian approaches to coordination in the context of international/comparative higher education. The structure and mechanisms associated with the coordination of universities in Canada can be viewed as quite unique when compared with the United States (Skolnik & Jones, 1992) or other federal states (Brown, Cazalis & Jasmin, 1992). McDaniel (1996) concludes that higher education institutions in certain Canadian provinces "have significantly more freedom (except with regard to finance)" compared with institutions in the United States and Western Europe in terms of governance arrangements. Canadian researchers have also contributed to major international, comparative projects which have also illustrated the uniqueness of the Canadian approach to coordination (Goedegebuure, Kaiser, Maassen, Meek, van Vught, & de Weert, 1994; Meek, Goedegebuure, Kivinen & Rinne, 1996).

Ironically, while the Canadian experience is increasingly represented in the international literature relatively little attention has been given to the comparative analysis of provincial systems within Canada. Skolnik and Jones (1993) have discussed provincial differences in terms of the coordination of both university and community college sectors, and a recent edited volume includes critical analyses of higher education in every province and territory (Jones, 1997), but many questions concerning the differences in coordination approaches and mechanisms between jurisdictions remain unexplored.

Funding

The new role of the universities as an important component of public policy, which emerged after the Second World War, allowed these institutions to expand at an amazing rate. There was tremendous growth in enrolment, the level and breadth of programs, and research activity. Many provinces created new institutions designed to address the increasing demands for higher education, including the four western provinces which abandoned the single provincial university concept in favour of expansion and decentralization. Except for a brief period of enrolment decline in the early 1950s, this period of expansion lasted for roughly twenty-five years.

The situation began to change in the early 1970s. The Canadian economy entered a recession, and "restraint" became a key term in public policy. Universities, which had enjoyed a long period of priorization on the political agenda, suddenly found themselves dealing with provincial governments which were looking for ways of reducing or capping expenditures. Theories of human capital, which had been used in some circles as a basis for the enormous expansion of Canadian higher education, lost favour with those who found that the presence of skilled manpower could not compensate for a shortage of oil or the problems caused by inflation in a global recession. The wisdom behind expanding the higher education system in the 1960s was brought into question as demographers began to predict that university enrolments would decline and then stabilize.

The relative security of university faculty, reinforced by their greater participation in university governance in the 1960s and early 1970s, was transformed into a feeling of insecurity and impotence in the face of budget cuts and institutional restraint (Murray, 1985). The faculty "transformed faculty associations into trade unions (or associations which behaved like unions) and bargained with the administration for as large a share as possible of the university income" (Neatby, 1985, p. 16).

Funding quickly became the central and most controversial issue in university-government relations. Universities, intermediary bodies, and other interested parties sponsored studies on the adequacy of provincial support. Research studies reviewed federal transfers to the provinces (for example: Gunther & Van Loon, 1981; Stevenson, 1981; Wu, 1985a) and the impact of federal transfers on provincial grants to the universities (for example: Dean, 1987; Wu, 1985b; Wu, 1986). Other studies focused on the impact of fiscal restraint on universities (G. Clarke, 1986; Dennison 1987; Hardy, 1996; Skolnik, 1986; Skolnik & Rowen, 1984). There was a general consensus that Canadian universities were receiving less provincial funding than they felt was necessary to maintain operations, and that real dollar provincial expenditures on higher education had declined.

A common theme within the literature on funding, and on university-government relations in general, is that there is a large gap between the thinking of the universities and the thinking of governments. Neither party seems to be able to fully appreciate the concerns of the other, and a "situation of two solitudes has emerged and created an unhealthy state of affairs" (MacDonald, 1976, p. 51).

Universities have simply been unable to convince governments that more money is necessary if the institutions are to continue to provide quality programs and services. University presidents continue to argue for additional funds. Provincial ministers continue to argue that higher education is an important area of public policy, but that government simply cannot provide the level of support requested by the universities (Jones, 1991b). According to Levin and Sullivan, "the two parties peer balefully at each other across a wide and apparently widening gulf" (1988, p. 1).

For some, the problem is that universities have unrealistic expectations given the political and economic climate (Levin & Sullivan, 1988). For others the problem is one of proof; it is difficult to demonstrate that universities are "underfunded" (Skolnik, 1986; Skolnik & Rowen, 1984). The argument that there is a "crisis of underfunding" has been used for many years, even though the basic argument is flawed (Jones, 1990). Still others have argued that the situation may become even worse if universities do not become more accountable to their public benefactors, demonstrating that they are using public funds efficiently (Cutt, 1990; Cutt & Dobell, 1990).

Surprisingly little attention has been given to how provincial governments make policy decisions concerning higher education, or how universities might effectively lobby for additional funds. One exception is a 1986 study conducted by the University of Manitoba to determine how the institution might improve its relationship with legislators (Jones, 1991a). Using a broad political framework, the study involved interviewing members of the province's legislative assembly to obtain feedback on the University's ongoing communications activities. Legislators were clearly interested in learning more about the institution and its activities, but they warned that the University should proceed slowly and cautiously in its attempts to improve university-government relations. It should be cognizant of such potential problems as increased politicization or perceptions of political partisanship. The author also concludes:

> . . . that there may be benefits to assuming a more positive approach, to expressing (university) problems and concerns within a context of institutional accomplishment and success. Whether such an approach would

> actually improve the relationship or make legislators more receptive to higher education concerns is extremely difficult to predict, but a "spoonful of sugar" might make higher education interests more palatable as inputs to the political system (Jones, 1991a, p. 104).

Others have argued that the universities should "prepare themselves to press the case more positively and more aggressively in the public arena" (MacDonald, 1976, p. 54; Bissell, 1968; Corry, 1970).

THE TRADITIONAL VIEW: A SUMMARY

The preceding sections represent a selective review of the literature on university-government relations, focusing on three related issues: institutional autonomy and public policy; coordination; and funding. While the literature involves different issues and themes, there appears to be a general consensus as to the nature of university-government relations, a traditional framework that is employed in attempts to study and understand these relationships. This traditional view involves a number of basic assumptions.

The first assumption is that universities are, and should continue to be, autonomous institutions. While there are concerns as to whether independence alone ensures that institutions will manage their affairs effectively and efficiently, it is generally assumed that independence is the most appropriate method of protecting academic freedom. There is also an implicit assumption that there is an institutional perspective, that the internal governance structures result in a university position on issues. Universities are discussed as single entities, as corporations where the view of the president and the position of the university are taken to be synonymous.

The second assumption is that higher education is a legitimate area of public policy. Universities are public utilities dependent on public funds. They play an important role in terms of economic and cultural development. Governments, therefore, have a responsibility to support higher education and a right to coordinate and regulate these public utilities.

The third assumption is that, given the importance of institutional autonomy, government intervention has been limited to the development of policies, mechanisms, and structures designed to coordinate, rather than directly control, university activities. Government intervention appears to be increasing, and universities must continue to be wary of attempts on the part of government to interfere with institutional autonomy.

Finally, it is assumed that university-government relations represent the structured interactions between university and government officials, with each side having a different perspective on higher education policy. In some provinces there is an intermediary body which attempts to "buffer" these two perspectives.

These four assumptions create a picture of university-government relations where interaction is limited to the disputes between two parties over a narrowly defined area of public policy involving the coordination of higher education. Both parties have a legitimate interest in this policy area, but each party has a distinct perspective on higher education policy.

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Determining the University's Goals: The Setting of the Problem

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Abstract

The Canadian university has moved from a decade of rapid expansion, accompanied by general public approval, to the so-called "steady state," of the 1970s, characterized by sharp public questioning of its directions and of its relevance. Criticism from both public and academics alike centres on the lack of consensus within the institution as to its purposes. Certain major factors have the potential to influence a university's choice of goals. Some of these flow out of the network of relationships of the university with its external environment while others stem from the social world of the institution itself. The paper concludes that, given expressions of public concern and what appear to be basic shifts in the fabric of Canadian society — and thus of its requirements of higher education — the re-consideration of institutional goals has become vital.

> *Clarifying utopian abstractions, and distinguishing between objectives for institutional development and for student development, not only sets a framework for evaluation, but also lays a cornerstone for educational improvement and financial survival Institutional effectiveness improves when objectives are held in awareness and when they are articulated in concrete terms. Efforts to clarify objectives and to increase self-consciousness about them can release strong forces for institutional improvement.*
>
> *Arthur W. Chickering*

During the 1960s the Canadian university might well have afforded to be complacent about its role, its performance, and its future. The need to solve pressing problems of providing space for a rapidly increasing student body, of recruiting staff, of developing libraries and laboratories, tended to push the fundamental question of direction to the periphery. Universities produced a steady stream of professionals. A larger body of consultants and researchers was placed at public service. That decade, in short, was one of rapid expansion accompanied by general public approval.

Today, public attitudes reflect not acceptance but anxiety. Students, parents, legislators, and major public bodies are critical and questioning. Assurance in the public mind of the efficiency — and of the effectiveness — of the university's performance has been shaken. How relevant, the public speculates, is today's university to contemporary society?

The climate of opinion now enveloping the university is linked to changes in the institution itself. There is abroad the belief that higher education should be open to everyone, that a general broadening of higher education is in the public interest. The student body itself has become more sophisticated and urbane, more aware of the environment in which it lives and demonstrably less bound by traditional values. University communities, too, are today pluralistic. An earlier, standard university orthodoxy has been succeeded by diversity and heterogeneity within the collective institution. The very term "community," frequently applied to the university, seems no longer applicable. Indeed, the university seems to have been taken over by professionalism and its reward structure geared to professional rather than institutional values. Academic departments, now much stronger, reinforce the grasp of professionalism on the institution. Among departments and among individual faculty members, students, and administration, there is sharp cleavage as to means and ends in higher education.

Nor does the university lack in public criticism:

> Many of the sources of public disaffection are obvious: the soggy economy, the student rebellion, professors who earn more by teaching less, etc. But far more fundamentally, it appears that the public is demonstrating its concern about the purposes that higher education has been asked to serve . . . in higher education, as in so many other areas of American life, the public is demanding a reassessment of our priorities, not the dismantling of the system. (Cass, 1971, p. 61)

But in the vanguard of the critics are the academics themselves, of whom one (Martin, 1967, p. 230) observes that:

> . . . differences of opinion arise, then, not over the basic nature of the university but over what forms its service shall take, and with what priorities. It is the lack of agreement on these issues that divides the university and makes it indecisive.

Even that assumption of agreement on the university's basic nature is denied by a contemporary study (Study Commission on University Governance, 1968, pp. 7–8) which holds that:

> . . . the melancholy truth is there is no widely shared understanding about the meaning and purpose of the institution. Lacking the unifying force which flows spontaneously from common understanding, the system is held together by a bureaucratic organization whose weakness is exposed whenever it is directly challenged.

These sentiments have their Canadian echoes:

> If there is a single cause which is to be blamed for the shortcomings of present government-university relations more than any other, it is probably the lack of clarity about the aims of higher education [and] by lack of clarity of purpose we do not mean the great normative justifications for education generally, or for universities specifically. (Commission on the Relations Between Universities and Governments, 1970, p. 80).

And the former president of Toronto's frequently embattled York University (Ross, 1970, p. 12) observes out of hard experience that:

> The most critical problem in the university today is the lack of consensus about purposes and functions. Among members of faculty there are widely divergent views about the university's role in society, about what should be taught and how it should be taught, about examinations and grades, about the kind of research that should be sponsored, about who should be in university, and about many other questions. These differences are so great as to appear almost irreconcilable. It may be that we are witnessing the breakdown of the university as we have known it, and that entirely new forms of higher education will appear.

What seems often apparent is that, in consequence of a lack of common understanding of institutional direction, educational change becomes a function of pressure rather than of rational planning. There is thus pressing reason for the university to reexamine its directions. But, as has been frequently and sardonically observed, methods of social research — especially that based on empirical data — have been applied by university professors to every important institution but their own. Certainly, the path of that research is not easy. Among the obvious obstacles is the factor of sheer size; the organization of the university as a conglomerate of bureaus, departments, institutes, and faculties; the orientation of faculty towards discipline rather than institution; and the difficulty of evaluating performance in the multi-purpose institution.

There are, moreover, at least three sets of biases responsible for opposition to self-examination of a fundamental kind within the university. There is the belief that educational outputs cannot be measured and that any attempt to do so is ludicrous, if not actually subversive of the purpose of the institution. There is the notion of inherent conflict between administrative efficiency, on the one hand, and academic effectiveness on the other. And there is the suspicion that efforts to improve management efficiency are really designed to increase the power of the administrator at the expense of the faculty member.

What potential values, what outcomes, might accrue to such a study? Clark Kerr (1963, p. 38) passes off the entire matter of institutional purpose in a single sentence: "The ends are already given — the improvement of service wherever truth and knowledge of high order may serve the needs of man." But this somewhat theatrical statement hardly serves as a signpost to the university. Generalities or abstractions are no substitute for an operationally useful statement of intent. Clearly, the clarification of institutional goals is a necessary preface to the evaluation of progress. The understanding of the goals of the immediate past are relevant to the postulation of the goals for the immediate future. Thus, Uhl (1971) proposes that the identification of present goals is a necessary step towards developing a convergence of opinion on future directions. Further, the university's goals must be defined, if only to differentiate it from the many other like institutions and activities with which it is in association, among them technical institutes, professional schools, and community colleges.

The objection is raised that the achievement of greater coherence and clarity by individual universities would tend to make them more alike as institutions. On the contrary, it is rather more likely that the clarification of focus by each university would lead to a greater stress on its individuality and style as an institution. Beyond that, it would facilitate better response to the queries and demands of a budgeteer and would increase the likelihood that institutional supporters and critics would direct their aid or shape their criticisms to its chosen purposes and not to theirs.

If, as the organization theorists have it, the seven steps in the planning process move through an articulation of philosophy, a statement of goals, the development of program and of organization, the recruitment of staff, the construction of facilities, and financing — the clarification of goals is a vital initial step.

Finally, there is value in the study of goals as a contribution of considerable significance to the development of a theory of organization in higher education. While *individuals* may well have considerable insight into organizations as social instruments:

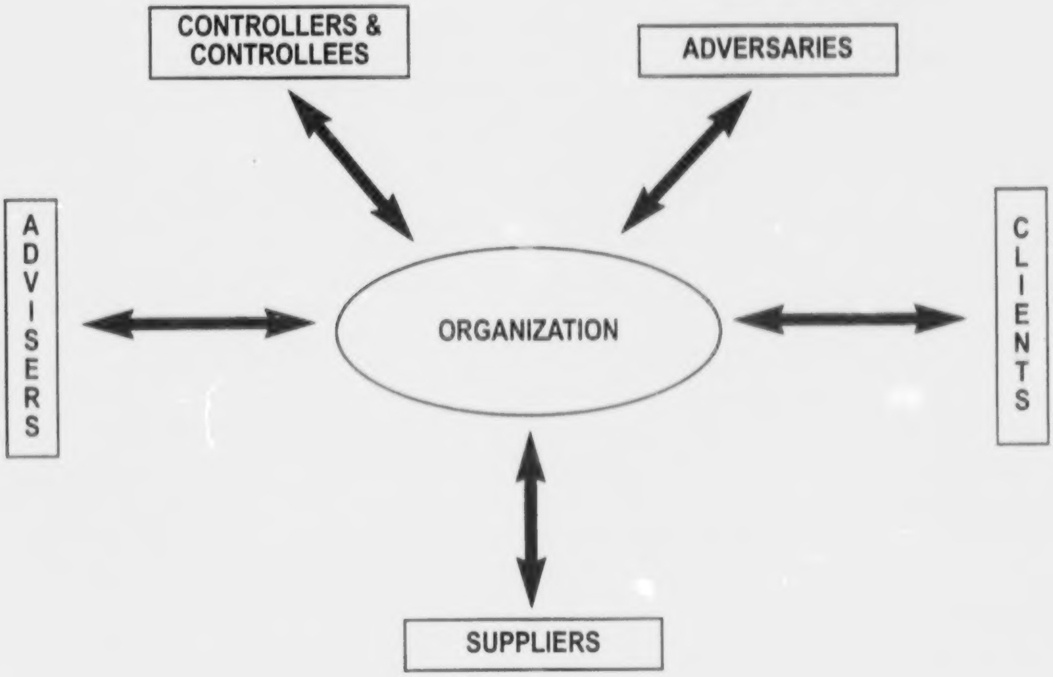
> . . . insight and private experiences may generate private understandings without producing a public body of knowledge adequate for the preparation of a next generation of administrators, for designing new styles of organizations for new purposes, for controlling organizations, or for appreciation of distinctive aspects of modern societies. (Thompson, 1967, p. 3)

* * *

Major factors, both internal and external, bear on a university's choice of goals.

Some of them originate from the organization's external environment, which is ambiguous indeed. Not only are problems received from it not clearly defined, but also those that appear clearly formulated may, in fact, be misleading. It is complicated and multi-faceted; so much so that out of necessity relatively simplistic images of the world must suffice to serve the organization's administrative needs. Nor is each part of the organization at all likely to view the environment from an identical perspective. That part of the environment which reinforces one group's perceptions within the organization may threaten those of another (Dill, 1964).

Moreover, the environment itself comprises not one but a number of different publics. There is, for example, the larger society which permits the organization to operate; there is that part of the total society which provides a pool of potential members; there are those other bodies with which the organization competes, cooperates, or has transactions with; and there is "the public-in-contact" with whom or on whom the organization's members work. Other sets of publics, somewhat different, which interrelate with the organization and have impact on it might be identified, as in this example (Gross, 1964, p. 411):



The demands of these publics are diverse — or even conflicting. Business expects the university to supply consultants; government bureaus expect to draw on its expertise in research; cities and towns expect the university to offer extension courses and maintain a role as an intellectual and cultural centre. And so, as Werdell (1968, pp 20–21) pessimistically observes:

> . . . administration of a multiversity is, almost by necessity, a holding action. In the face of conflicting demands and purposes, balance among the competing forces is reluctantly substituted for the more difficult task of molding an institution that best fosters diversity among its students.

However these publics may be delineated, the university is interdependent with the society of which it is a subsystem. The university depends on outside sources for political and economic support, even when its product is not of immediate "use." It depends on society for its legitimation. At the same time, the university makes contributions upon which society has come to depend. Indeed, "The academic and non-academic worlds are not only interdependent, they are interpenetrating" (Parsons, 1968, p. 174).

But academics do not unreservedly accept a sense of partnership between the university and the society that nurtures it. A separateness from society, a freedom for the university to set its own goals independent of society, is the essential ingredient of yet another view. Here, the university is seen not as a production line in the service of existing society but rather as an institution charged with the essential function of criticism of society and the diagnosis of its ills. Consequently, the university must remain if not *irresponsible* in its relationship to the community, at least willing to incur the risk of antagonizing interests and groups within it. Paradoxically, it may be the duty of the university, as occasion warrants, to bite the hand that feeds it (MacPherson, 1968).

The university thus influences society and is influenced by it. Within the university institution, certain interdependencies are of particular significance. There is the influence of the alumni, described as a kind of "family" relationship felt in and out of the university's councils. Contractual research has its impact on curricula, faculty membership, facilities, and budgets. Accrediting bodies and professional associations, too, have their effect on admission requirements and academic standards. And the university may be influenced both directly and indirectly by private donors or foundations. In passing, one notes the tendency, not typical in business, of outside groups to apply pressure to the institution (without accepting a commensurate obligation to support or contribute to it) and the intimacy with which their representatives operate in the decision-making councils of the institution (Corson, 1960). Wriston (1937, p. 20), summarizes the essence of the matter:

> If the college were wholly alien to its environment, it could not perform its function . . . On the other hand, if it yields completely to its environment, it equally fails in its objectives. It must maintain a realistic contact without compromising its essential function.

But it is the factor of relationships with government which is paramount. That relationship has changed, never to be the same.

> It is useless to imagine that universities can be forever free from national pressures, political and social. It is useless, indeed dangerous, to imagine that university autonomy is something capable of definition in eternally comprehensive terms. It is useless to imagine that the elements of reciprocal influence and authority between university systems and others can

> ever be regarded as fixed. Nor can jurisdictions be regarded as fixed. Academic security can never come in this manner. Neither governments nor universities can hope to exempt themselves from those changes which it is not the least of their functions, within their appropriate fields, to encourage. But the characteristic mark of the liberal government in its relations with universities is the attitude of partnership; and the characteristic of the wise university in sealing that relationship is that, like any partner, it must share the losses as well as the gains. There is some evidence that neither party has fully realized its role, but, in my submission the greater responsibility at this point of our history lies with the universities. (Cooper, 1966, pp. 19–20)

In Canada, relationships of universities to government seem closer to that of reluctant competitors, sparring in their respective corners. A forbidding alternative to mutual adjustment here, as elsewhere, is a major infiltration of the state into higher education. Abundant illustration exists in other jurisdictions of political domination, not only of higher education functions but of administrative control (Moos & Rourke, 1959). From the viewpoint of government, arguments for control are substantial. There is the expectation that control devices might offer savings in rapidly escalating budgets. Certain practices in higher education, government argues, cry out for remedy as, for example, the lack of coordination among institutions and the inefficient distribution of educational functions among them. Legislators are disturbed by the idea of inter-institutional competition, not only in programs of instruction but also for students. To which might be added their uneasy speculation that university authorities are not making full disclosure of the truly pertinent facts. Thus far in Canada, though province and university are now intimately bound by the umbilical cord of finance, there is little evidence of *administrative* control of the university.

Government aside, there are other factors in the university's external environment which affect its choice of goals. Jacques Barzun (1968, pp. 243–246), a sharp and frequent critic of the American university, argues that, "if the university is to save itself by making the changes that it is already eager and able to make, it must act not singly but in groups." A university, for example, can scarcely afford substantial modification to a Ph.D. degree lest it be seen as a dilution of that degree, a depreciation of its prestige value, and thus risk the ship's rat effect of students and professors fleeing the sinking hull. The argument, of course, is not against change; rather, Barzun proposes that, while the individual institution must in spirit remain a single entity, "it should from time to time join with other universities to introduce ripened innovations." In more subtle ways, too, the influence of other institutions may be felt. Doubtless, many North American institutions have been influenced by images held by their staff of such academic titans as the University of Chicago, Harvard, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, or Berkeley. Nor is the influence of institutions over one another to be measured solely in terms of emulation. A potential determinant of goals is institutional rivalry — of which examples abound — a motivation which can mobilize and bind the group to group goals, whether or not those goals best meet public need.

Public and quasi-public bodies have their impact on the goals of universities. Indeed, a major characteristic of our time is the extent to which institutional planning is now being undertaken external to universities. In Canada, the recommendations of the Massey Commission (Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Science, 1950) led to the establishment of the Canada Council which, in turn, has profoundly influenced the arts, humanities, and social sciences. The Duff-Berdahl Commission (1966), both in the timing and content of its report, affected the reshaping of university government in Canada. The Report of the Senate Special Committee on Science Policy (1971) will, in the long term, significantly shape the research policy of Canadian universities in the sciences. Similarly, the reports of Royal Commissions appointed in Ontario (Commission on Postsecondary Education in Ontario, 1972), Alberta (Commission on Educational Planning, 1972), and Manitoba (Task Force on Postsecondary Education in Manitoba, circa 1973) will modify the goals of higher education.

The *internal* social world of the university, too, affects its choice of goals. The formal structure of the organization does not wholly describe it since it is invariably supplemented by an informal structure which reflects the personalities of individuals with their special problems and interests.

Of central importance among these internal factors is the element of leadership. In one view, the characteristics of the responsible leader are to be summarized under two headings: the avoidance of opportunism and the avoidance of utopianism. The former is the pursuit of immediate short-run advantage without reference to principle or ultimate consequence. Utopianism, on the other hand, "hopes to avoid hard choices by a flight to abstractions." The heart of this argument concerns the responsibility of leadership in setting goals and the vulnerability of institutions in which goals are unclear.

> Leadership is irresponsible when it fails to set goals and therefore lets the institution drift. The absence of controlling aims forces decisions to be made in response to immediate pressures. Of course, many large enterprises do drift, yet they survive. The penalties are not always swift, and very often bare survival is possible even though the fullest potentialities of the enterprise are not realized and significant changes in identity do occur. (Selznick, 1969, p. 186)

The principal danger of short-run practical adaptations — of opportunism — lies in their uncontrolled and usually negative effects on organizational character. The carefully cultivated charisma of special competence may become vague and abstract. What are claimed as goals may, in fact, be merely a rationalization of activities arising out of opportunistic decision-making.

Another danger is equally important: an excessive response to outside pressures. While the leadership must take account of the environment and adapt both to its limitations and opportunities, institutional surrender must not be made in the name of organizational survival. The danger is real that outside elements may invade the organization, so dominating parts of it that it is no longer truly independent. Utopianism — the over-generalization of purpose — may leave the institution vulnerable to both external and internal pressures. Generality in purpose is congenial to the opportunism of external — and internal — groups. Institutional continuity and identity are to be protected by that definition of mission which sets out distinctive character and abilities.

Organizational structure, like leadership, is an important internal element determining goals. Neal Gross (1963) argues in his study of organizational lag in universities that, historically, the basic approach of the North American university has not been that of a functional division of labor among the members of its faculty but rather the periodic redefinition of academic roles so as to encompass the diverse tasks it has come, over time, to assume. While other kinds of organizations have met proliferating functions with increased specialization, the university has chosen to heap function after function on its personnel.

But, though universities have assumed a variety of new organizational objectives, the primary criterion of the reward system used to evaluate individual performance remains that of productivity in research, tied to which is consulting, which flatters both ego and pocketbook. Here lies a basic anomaly: though the reward system gives highest priority among the several functions of the university to the advancement of knowledge, the basic organization of most universities is that of an agency whose primary function is the transmission of knowledge.

A basic structural change which has its consequences for the choice of institutional goals is the trend towards the granting of increased autonomy to organization sub-units within the institution. The history of higher education over a half-century has been one of a diminution of power by boards of governors and presidents in the control of academic affairs. What now seems apparent is that the department has become the keystone of the university's structural framework, the homebase of varieties of professionalism which may or may not be in tune with the values of the institution. Many have noted this phenomenon, characterizing the modern university as a miscellaneous collection of faculties, research institutes, hospitals, laboratories, and departments — held together by a common concern over parking. "If the Edsel were a department," Paul Grambsch (1970) quips, "it would still be in production." This fragmentation has its bleak consequences in:

> . . . the development of some faculties at the expense of others, the neglect of liberal education in order to meet the needs of the professional and technical schools, marked discrepancies in the standards among faculties on the same campus, the donation of funds to marginal activities because the needs of the whole institution are not effectively presented, the submerging of one or more basic disciplines in a single professional school, and the lack of interdisciplinary teaching and research programs. (Corson, 1960, p. 21)

* * *

There are other elements of university structure affecting goals: the degree of power of the faculty as a body over educational policies; the pressure on the university president to give primacy to such functions as finance and public relations rather than to the academic problems of the university; and the steadily diminishing power of the board of governors over the internal operation of university affairs. Size is a further factor which has a bearing on institutional functioning and goal choice, though this dimension does not appear to have been the object of much investigation. One observes, however, that as an institution matures and expands, the structural elements which comprise it become more varied and its sense of direction more diffuse. That diversity may well militate against the achievement of a constructive consensus on goals.

Among the factors internal to the organization which tend to shape organizational goals (and which makes the specification of those goals a matter of such great complexity) is the behavior of its members. Empirical evidence of this relationship is scarce. Yet all academics will have observed "that no small part of the problem of governance in higher education may be traced to the predisposition of members of the academic community to interpret the same events quite differently." (Pfnister, 1970, p. 9). The problem created by these different perceptions may well become acute, particularly when faculty and administration are the two parties involved. Nor is it merely a matter of "poor communication" — the stock phrase. The real difficulty is that though individuals hear one another quite well, they have quite different interpretations of what they see and hear. Faculty and administration members living on the same premises, Pfnister observes, may not operate on the same premises. The same observation might be applied to the various faculties and schools which comprise the institution.

> It is somewhat startling to realize that there may indeed be a wide gulf between men whose training, concerns, and values, have lain in the general areas of scientific pursuits, and men of non-technical background . . . [accompanied by the] danger that the divergence of experience set and harden a real and fundamental dichotomy of attitudes and values between the two worlds, and encourage an unbridgeable hostility between them. (Haskins, 1960, p. 147)

And, to add to the complexity, different units of the university may well support the same goals — for different reasons.

Academics who have shared in the administration of the institution confirm that colleagues respond to problems in a fairly predictable way. Several social scientists have attempted the classification of participants within the organization in terms of the roles they play in its functioning. Perhaps best known is Gouldner's (1957, 1958, p. 448) classification of "Cosmopolitans" and "Locals" in reference to the orientation or attachment of academics to their institutional base. Within the Cosmopolitans are the *Outsiders* and the *Empire Builders*. Among the Locals — those close to the institutional base — are the supportive *Dedicated*, the *True Bureaucrats*, loyal to the place itself; the *Home Guard*, who have the least occupational specialization and commitment, who tend to be neither full-time researchers nor teachers but rather administrators, and who do not occupy the highest administrative positions but are on the second rung; and, finally, there are the *Elders,* long standing members of the organization with a deep and permanent commitment to the organization.

Other members in the typical organization are characterized as "unique troublemakers" (Moore, 1962); or in terms of how accepting members are of the organization's intentions in the disposal of their energies (Caplow, 1964); or according to their upward mobility (or indifference to it) within the organization (Presthus, 1962); or as groups of them may be apathetic, erratic, strategic, or conservative (Sayles, 1958).

And finally, an element which seems certain in the future in Canadian universities to affect the goal-determining processes of the institution is the affiliation of staff, academic and non-academic alike, with organized labour. One can only speculate on the effect, not just on institutional goals but on structure, organization, and finance, to say nothing of the more subtle potential influences on the spirit of the university — that elusive intangible which distinguishes its unique place in society. Collective bargaining, whether organized under a provincial labour code or under a revised university act, would seem almost inevitably to affect institutional balances and goals. It is not difficult to imagine that the sharp differentiation of roles implicit in an employer-employee contract might lead to the calcification of postures and to the exacerbation of conflict. One surmises that democracy, as a significant value, might find itself opposed to the achievement and maintenance of academic excellence. The argument on the other side — perhaps less convincing — is that staff discontent having been resolved through the creation of a bargaining unit, employer and employee would join in unalloyed amity to plan institutional directions.

There are today four general perceptions of the university. There is the university viewed as elitist in character or, alternatively, as expansionist in nature ever broadening the range of its service to society. There is the notion of the university as an institution primarily inclined towards the preservation of knowledge and its transmission to students; and the university devoted to the creation of new knowledge. Which of these or what balance of these will best serve contemporary society?

Sir Walter Moberly (1949) writing in *The Crisis in the University* poses questions which continue relevant. "What are universities for?" "What effect should they have on their alumni?" "What are their responsibilities to the outside world?" Answers from on and off the campus are discordant and unclear. Yet institutional self-confidence and strength spring only out of agreement on a sense of direction.

All of society's institutions in the last half-century have been challenged and threatened to one degree or another by accelerating change. A difficult and profound question is how seriously to take this change. It is an entirely defensible view — one which infuses the argument above — that there is indeed a widening chasm between the safe, pat, past, and an eerie future. In consequence of this change, the university is obliged to take stock of itself.

The task of redefining goals is to be undertaken not merely as a sop to a querulous public nor as a maneuver to win political support from legislators. What is at issue is the continued vitality of each institution. That vitality is not to be found, as Robert K. Merton observes, in the quest for continually improved means to carelessly examined ends.

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Surviving the Crash: Canadian Universities in the Era of Disillusionment*

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Gloom is very much in fashion in the Western world. Economists predict that the current recession will develop into a catastrophic world depression. Ecologists anticipate mass starvation. Climatologists warn of an imminent return of the Great Ice Age. Armed with batteries of computer projections, the experts from the Club of Rome pester businessmen and bureaucrats while Paul Ehrlich and Robert Heflbroner prod the anxieties of thoughtful liberals and social democrats.

It is probably no coincidence that so many of these despairing trend-setters live in universities. Whether or not a state of no-growth will or should become normal for the rest of technologically advanced society, it has already reached the academic world in Canada, the United States and much of western Europe.

In retrospect, it is apparent that the academic profession is at the end of an exhilarating fifteen-year power trip. The landing was rough. The survivors are shaken and suitably nervous about their future. To be fair, the professors were not solely responsible for the trip. The journey was directed and financed by governments with the enthusiastic support of most editorial opinion. However, academics filled the seats, enjoyed the view and, with a few valiant exceptions, offered no protests against the journey and its consequences. Instead, they pretended that they were participants in a modern equivalent of a

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* Based on a paper given at Memorial University, Newfoundland, as part of that university's 25th anniversary celebrations.

Greek academy, responsible only to themselves for their five-figure salaries, their travel grants and their multimillion dollar research equipment.

If brilliance has any advantage over more pedestrian qualities of mind, it is in the grandeur of its delusions. Academics have pretended that they were climbing Parnassus when, in fact, their institutions were being used as artifacts to glorify the creativity of politicians and to satisfy the transient expectations of taxpayers. In Ontario, the equivalent of the enormous sum created by funding the Canada Pension Plan has been spent to expand the facilities of the province's university and community college system. While cornerstones were laid and monumental buildings were erected, the unglamorous early years of public education were virtually ignored and mentally ill children were abandoned in "hospitals" at Orillia and Smith's Falls.

If there was a single supervening rationale for the impressive expansion of post-secondary education in Canada, it was the widespread assertion that universities and colleges would furnish much of the motive power for economic growth. The claim was regularly promoted by such influential (although flexible) oracles as John Kenneth Galbraith, but perhaps its more important Canadian formulation could be found in the 1965 report of the Economic Council of Canada. Under the shrewd chairmanship of Dr. John Deutsch, a future principal of Queen's University, the Council insisted that educational investment paid off at rates between 15% and 20% per year — a usurious return in those pre-inflationary times. Unfortunately, there seems to be a flaw in the argument. After a decade of unprecedented educational investment, the Canadian economy appears to be at a dead stop.

If growth seemed a goal too servile to corporate capitalism, it was easily supplanted, particularly in the United States, by the myth that universities were uniquely fitted to dissolve the injustices of a racist, sexist and class-ridden society. In Canada, by hiring sufficient local talent, they might also eliminate our alleged colonial mentality. Such arguments appealed to the new self-importance of universities and their denizens. If university credentials were indeed a passport to comfortable living and personal fulfillment, justice demanded that they be made equally available to all — perhaps even regardless of demonstrated ability. If universities had been a narrow ladder to a privileged elite, the liberal answer was to put up more ladders. In most parts of Canada, governments encouraged existing universities to expand and often opened new campuses when progress proved too slow to satisfy an impatient electorate. So long as faculty incomes and promotion prospects shared in the general inflation there was little audible protest. The chief burden of teaching the flood of ill-equipped newcomers fell to junior faculty and graduate assistants while senior professors could usually reserve their energies for research, post-graduate students and the rewarding prospects of lateral transfer. The fact that economic inequality is confirmed, if anywhere, at the outset of the educational process was largely ignored by academics, legislators and editorial commentators.

Conservatives and radicals within the university could each burnish their respective myth but they were unanimous about the most self-serving illusion of all. With rare unanimity, university presidents and student revolutionaries agreed that academic institutions were tremendously important. If universities were so central to the economic system, if they possessed such incredible potential for transforming an evil and malfunctioning society, the struggle of the late 1960s for power on university boards, councils and senates and within departments was, perhaps, a real, not a sham, battle.

You cannot swindle an honest man. The mythology which promoted the university and college explosion of the past fifteen years usually rested on unstated but unmistakable material interests. The faculty could abandon the old vow of poverty and self-effacement — once the real underpinning of their academic freedom — and enjoy unprecedented status and income. The students found gratification in imitating and surpassing the self-importance of their teachers. Radicals discovered that a university campus is probably the safest place in the world to play at revolution. The middle classes, who almost invariably manage to find some comfort in this world, soon discovered that lower costs and increased opportunities for higher education were to their substantial advantage. The stockbroker's thick-witted offspring could now meet the reduced admission requirements; the fish packer's clever daughter might never have an opportunity to graduate from high school. Meanwhile, as Ontario's Committee on Postsecondary Education rudely pointed out, much of the cost of higher education was borne by those who were unlikely ever to profit from it.

Of course, as any experienced swindler can testify, a confidence trick has a limited lifespan. The growth promoters and their accomplices have vanished or changed their colours, leaving over-expanded colleges and universities vulnerable to the recurrent fashion of anti-intellectualism. It should be dismaying to discover that, after a generation in which access to education has expanded almost beyond belief, the two most conspicuous fads among the young are irrational spiritualism and utopian primitivism. At a time when the doomsday theorists are making our flesh creep with warnings of resource depletion, the only unlimited resource is presumably human intelligence. These days, we are regularly warned to regard it as a menace. Perhaps that is fair retribution for institutions which, themselves, endorsed the highly irrational assumption that money, manpower, bricks and mortar were sufficient prerequisites for solving the problems of society.

Unfortunately, while universities were by no means the sole creators of this illusion, their co-conspirators — notably Governments — will not stick around to share the rap. Having justified the recent academic power trip by promises they could not fulfill, universities and their faculty now face the fate of the medicine man who did not skip town in time. If universities have such a monopoly of wisdom, some will now ask, why have they no rational or acceptable prescription for our developing economic mess? If universities foster culture and civilization, why have they been centres for so much that is uncivil and destructive? If universities profess to guide governments and business in managing their affairs, why is their own management frequently so time-consuming and inefficient?

Such questions and criticisms are no longer restricted to dyspeptic editors or to know-nothing backbenchers, preaching the annual sermon to the folks in Buncombe. Across

Canada, provincial Governments are looking for ways to limit public spending on an unpopular cause. In Manitoba, Premier Ed Schreyer warned protesting university students that he would prefer to spend extra tax dollars on installing municipal water systems than on granting them free tuition. The Ontario government's decision to cover only half the universities' loss from inflation in their funding formula for 1975–1976 became one of the first recent acts of the Davis regime, wise or foolish, to provoke no public outcry. It will almost certainly be followed, once the era of minority rule is over, by the major increase in student fees urged by the Wright Commission. At a time when a university degree is already a barely marketable commodity, increasing its cost should have a devastating impact on enrolments (and on university and college budgets).

Since virtually all major Canadian universities now depend heavily on tax support, tightening purse strings promise a new era of turmoil on Canadian campuses. Still traumatized by almost a decade of struggle with student militants, university administrators now face the wrath of faculty and staff. Some institutions are contemplating the dismissal of tenured professors or the imposition of drastic reductions in their standard of living. Elsewhere, a new academic underclass — unemployed graduate students — competes for ill-paid temporary appointments, always aware that they are an expendable buffer against worse times to come.

In the circumstances, unionization becomes increasingly attractive to university teachers and support staff alike. The thought is no longer unthinkable. Five years ago, who could have predicted the militancy of school teachers or civil servants? Of course, bargaining effectiveness usually depends on a level of public support or public vulnerability which professors should be cautious about testing. They are not primary school teachers, running an essential day-care service, or snowplow operators, withdrawing their services before a mid-winter blizzard. Faculty at The University of Manitoba or Carleton University may be disillusioned by the public's tolerance of the loss of their services.

While some argue that faculty and staff unionization will enhance the authority of university boards of governors, it seems more likely that the frail autonomy of governors or trustees would collapse before the onslaught of major financial demands. In 1974, negotiators for Ontario's hospital workers complained that they were bargaining with a shadow: settlement demanded the direct intervention of the provincial treasury, the sole significant source of funds for hospital operations. The price for direct confrontation between professors and their paymasters would be more direct imposition of government priorities — elegantly expressed by an Ontario cabinet minister in recent years as "more scholar for the dollar."

Whether or not unionization could save the academic profession from returning to the meagre salaries and modest status of a generation ago, it offers few other comforting features. The institution of academic tenure is already marked as a victim to the suspicions of students and politicians and to the wrath of younger teachers, now permanently excluded from the guild; but its trade union alternative, job security, would have no less stifling consequences for university staffing. Unionization, with its arbitrary definition of management-employee relations, would also tend to eliminate those features of the university which make it function, albeit imperfectly, as a form of industrial democracy.

In summary, the gloom around most Canadian universities is not only justified but likely to endure. It threatens internal conflict so bitter as to make the student friction of the Sixties as quaint a memory as the panty raids of the Fifties. It might also produce a better kind of university. Hard times are not necessarily ennobling but they are often the only times when hard priorities are chosen. Now that the university power trip is definitely over, the survivors must assess their resources, divide up their duties and get set for a long, hard struggle.

Often overlooked in the catalogue of woes and failings afflicting Canadian universities are some impressive accomplishments. All growth is exhausting and the incredible expansion in students, facilities and staff during the past fifteen years brought invisible as well as visible strains. In spite of them, Canadian universities and colleges also fostered an outpouring of creativity and analysis in both national and regional cultures which have already established the past decade as a critical epoch in our history. The academic community played the leading role, for example, in documenting the consequences of environmental damage and in turning that raw data into public awareness. Would anyone dare to claim that environmental research would have been so significant or so publicized if corporations and governments had enjoyed a monopoly of scientific research or if scientists had been dependent on their private resources?

Examples of achievement during the era of university expansion will multiply with added historical perspective. One which might be forgotten was the incidental contribution of an exploding college and university system in soaking up surplus people. As Walter Pitman, the new president of Ryerson Polytechnical Institute, has pointed out, if Ontario's enrolments in postsecondary education had remained at their 1960 level, Canada's richest province would have experienced unemployment rates of 1930s dimensions. Men and women who were busy venting the frustrations of postponed adulthood on academic administrators might have been pouring their rage on politicians and the economic system — with rather more volatile consequences.

In general, Canada's universities should face a difficult future without a debilitating sense of guilt. If some leading scholars gave bad advice, some politicians were foolish enough to take it, and to give some remarkably silly orders in return. Both sides should learn a becoming modesty from the experience.

Of all the illusions of the power trip era, the myth of the Greek academy has probably proved the most durable — if only because it is also comfortable for the faculty. Unhappily, academic freedom has sometimes been confused with a claim to substantial public resources. Not every university can afford a cyclotron or a papyrological collection. Every university must have the strength to protect its scholars, senior and junior, from denunciation for subversion, racism or whatever the fashion in know-nothingism dictates.

Scholars who find it intolerable to answer to the community for the validity, if not for the consequences, of their work deserve the freedom and the encouragement to create their own equivalent of the Greek academy as, in a sense, Sir Max Beloff and his associates have recently attempted in Great Britain.

Public universities, like other public institutions, must expect to serve demonstrable public needs but they must have the right to argue — fiercely, if need be — about how best those needs should be met. Universities, for example, have every right to question the ability and preparation of the students who flow into them. It is not elitism to fight what the late Dr. Alexander Wittenberg described as "educational inflation," a process which postpones the mastery of indispensable academic skills until finally universities are compelled, at extravagant cost, to instruct their matriculants in basic algebra and English composition.

On the other hand, it is time that universities recognized that formal education may be inferior to human experience as a preparation for postsecondary study. If there is a reform whose time has come, it is the abolition of the notion that education is a process divinely ordained for those between the ages of six and twenty-one. There is no revealed law of human development which even suggests that the possibilities of a university are best available for those between their seventeenth and twentieth year, and there is ample experience to the contrary. Generally speaking, across Canada, we make it as difficult as we can for a youngster to leave school before an arbitrary age. We make it as easy as we can for a favoured share of high school graduates to go directly to university, even when everything in their souls cries out for the challenge of real life. Then, once they have become adults, with families and responsibilities, we make it incredibly difficult for people to do more than dabble for a decade with part-time degree courses.

Anyone who has ever taught mature students knows the general folly and the specific injustice of this state of affairs. Who better can appreciate literature, philosophy or history than those who have experienced humanity itself. Across Canada, the greatest untapped pool of ability lies with those — a majority of them women — who grew past the university age without its invitation even being extended.

In most of Canada, birthrates are falling. As the postwar baby boom passes through the postsecondary system, enrolments from the usual cohort of participants have stabilized and, by the early 1980s, will probably fall. The population grows older and the prospect of supporting a nation of pensioners replaces the tensions of the youth explosion as a fresh concern for public policy-makers. The need to recycle people as well as tin cans and newsprint becomes more urgent as the pace of obsolescence in expertise and technique accelerates. As mankind seeks ways of reducing the consumption of energy and materials, the idea of an educative society becomes less utopian. Whatever its other defects, education is only a modest consumer of scarce resources.

Anyone associated with a university or community college can testify that students armed with every formal qualification have enrolled without the slightest hope of satisfaction. Propelled into the institution by parental pressure, a grim awareness of certification demands or a simple lack of easy alternatives, many students find themselves bored, exasperated and ultimately debilitated by their exclusion from the real world. They wait in frustration, enduring the final stage of the longest *rite de passage* yet designed by any tribe of the human race.

Relief may be in sight. A society of rising average age may soon have more urgent tasks for its young than resentfully cluttering its classrooms. In return, it will have to recognize that education is a right of maturity as well as of youth. Mature students will be needed by universities and colleges: in return, they may impose heavy demands on these institutions and on those who bear the costs. Mature students will expect more from their teachers and they will need a much higher level of financial support as they seek to maintain a life-style and a family. The benefit, for both society and institution, will be a more solid commitment to learning. For most mature students, education is not a mere obstacle course on the way to an officially certified maturity: it is a chosen goal. Their attitude can be contagious. As some can testify from experience, older students have as little patience with slipshod fellow students as with indifferent teachers, and the standards of both improve.

Unfortunately, more demanding and committed students will do much more to improve the quality of university teaching than other alleged improvements looming over the horizon. In the wake of pronouncements of concern about teaching by politicians, university presidents and their respective acolytes, there is some risk that professors may be tumbled into the same morass of educational "methodology" that Hilda Neatby discovered in Canadian high schools a generation ago. Like curriculum development institutes, academic hardware salesmen and peregrinating evaluators of departmental efficiency, methodology and its language, "Educator's English," belongs to the world of administrators, not teachers. Teaching is an art, learned from experience and association. Universities must, however, accept greater responsibility for ensuring that the art is acquired. Junior faculty must no longer assume major teaching responsibilities with no more than cautionary recollections of former professors and a few scraps of corridor lore.

The university's standard of teaching might be improved if those prominent academics who have found fresh careers as public oracles would choose between the classroom and politics. In the era of the university power trip, it seemed easier to change the world by walking with the mighty or their surrogates, exchanging a few secrets and much gossip. That era is over. If university teachers cannot transmit to their students the values and the analytical tools with which to make sense of their world, they have no special right to proclaim themselves as special messengers to the mighty.

There may be no message, however, if the universities succumb to the recurring campaign to divorce teaching and research. A frightening alliance of students, taxpayers and government is gathering for a fresh assault on universities as centres of research and independent scholarship and academics should have no illusions about their vulnerability. A few absurdly esoteric research topics, scholars whose research ended years ago with a marginal thesis, others whose productivity is now limited to gentlemanly farming; all will be targets to split the vital union of teaching and creativity.

Universities must be prepared to mobilize counter-arguments. Without continuous exploration at the frontiers of their subject, professors will soon have nothing worth teaching. They will almost inevitably fall into the kind of sterile repetition which most thoughtful students have condemned in their high school experience. In spite of some student claims, there is substantial evidence that active scholars are also effective teachers — particularly for that critical core of students who are also committed to learning. It is also apparent that there are or will be enough talented people who can combine research and teaching if only universities can be persuaded to make room for them.

University-based research, like universities themselves, cannot be allowed to stop simply because a severe economic squeeze happens to coincide with a particularly savage irrationalist assault. Faced with a bewildering array of problems, from the technology of tar sands development or of drilling for oil on the Atlantic shelf to the prospect of racial tensions in Canadian cities, we need a more effective mobilization of our organized intelligence than at any time since the Second World War. However, if humanity faces only half the crises now promised by the philosophers of doomsday, the universities will soon be competing with a lusty array of charlatans and demagogues, each with a vested interest in curbing serious thought and rational analysis.

In such circumstances, the Canadian academic community will need the unpractised virtues of courage and solidarity. Affluence has made them rusty. Taking a stand is so regularly condemned as "over-reaction," that academics seem to have an occupational predisposition for sitting down. And, once seated, no issue is ever so clear that a committee of professors cannot manage to produce both a compromise and a minority report. These may be the symptoms of a community that, to its credit, prefers discourse to violence. Interminable discourse and invariable reconsideration could also contribute to the death of the university as we know it.

The academic community in Canada does not face an early or a comfortable return to public esteem. Its role remains the same — to hold a mirror to our society, allowing neither a flattering self-portrait nor an outsider's caricature but reality. It is the role of an honest friend. As both educator and analyst of its society, the university community can look forward to being more needed and less wanted than at almost any earlier period in its history.

Universities, Governments, and the Public*

H. IAN MACDONALD

York University

Having spent ten years in academic life and then ten years in government, I am intrigued by some of the inherent differences that have emerged in the course of my experience. As an academic in the Department of Economics at the University of Toronto, interested in matters of public policy, I found that I had the freedom to speak but not the access to the facts; then, as a civil servant, I had the access to the facts but not the freedom to speak. I have often thought that, if we could find some way to wed those two separate states, public policy would certainly be the beneficiary.

Over the past few months, I have been meeting informally with the faculty members of York University to seek their opinions and advice on the problems and future directions of the University. Throughout those discussions, I found two prevailing themes occurring over and over again. The first is that we must begin immediately to determine our objectives and to chart our future course, thereby being in a position to respond positively, coherently and strongly to the various criticisms that are being levelled against us. The second is related to the first, and that is the festering tension and misunderstanding that has emerged over the past few years between the academic community and government. Circumstances such as modest enrolment increases, increased government scrutiny of the details of university operations, and a certain uneasiness in the public's mind have resulted in a widening of the gap. It is now imperative to find ways of narrowing it. A situation of two solitudes has emerged and created an unhealthy state of affairs.

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* This article is based on an address given by President MacDonald to the Association of Canadian University Information Bureaus on September 29, 1975, in Halifax, NS.

The present relationship between government and the universities must be seen against the rapid growth of universities in the sixties and the sudden change of direction and the emergent priorities of government in the seventies. I do not think that the seventies are all that different from earlier periods, except in one particular — they succeeded the sixties! The sixties, in a sense, are the anomaly in the history of universities, in that universities have always had a particularly difficult cross to bear before the public, in withstanding accusations of elitism and in making their particular values and responsibilities known. Universities are not the institution most readily understood or even appreciated by the man on the street, but in the sixties they went through a period of virtual euphoria in terms of expansion and, perhaps, came to believe that such a condition would endure forever. Thus, the contrast of the seventies is the sharper and the occurrence in the seventies of escalating inflation, which has imposed so heavily on all universities, has added a special dimension to their difficulties.

During the sixties postsecondary institutions in Canada developed at an unprecedented rate. In a relatively short space of years, the number of provincially supported universities in Ontario grew from 7 to 15, and 22 new Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology were created as part of the postsecondary system. In fact, I recall, when I was Chief Economist in the Ontario Government, calculating that postsecondary capital investment in the quinquennial period 1967–1972 in Ontario would surpass all of that which had taken place in the previous 100 years of Confederation.

That was the era of "the quantitative revolution" in education. There were some persons, even in those days, who expressed concern from time to time about the extent of the outlay and the pace of events, but our social, economic, and demographic circumstances were such that we really had no choice. But I think there was a fundamental mistake made in those days, and I do not make that comment with the virtue of hindsight, because I remember my rather passionate debates with educators about what I thought was a mistaken application of a piece of economic jargon to justify expenditure in education, that unfelicitous phrase "investment in human capital."

Throughout the sixties not only educators, but indeed the Economic Council of Canada, tried to suggest that the ultimate justification of expenditure in education was an investment in human capital from which we would get an ever-expanding gross national product. The economic justification was of the same character as investing in a factory or, for that matter, in a super highway. I remember arguing rather forcefully against that proposition because, first of all, I believe that education is more than an economic process, more than a means to an end, and more than mere occupational training. It is a prerequisite of a civilized society and a process whose intrinsic worth has been demonstrated over and over again. I believe the true justification of higher education is to be found in terms of social and cultural development, the broadened horizons of individuals, and the extension of the frontiers of knowledge, particularly in Canada, which is changing so rapidly as a result of newcomers becoming a part of this country. It also seemed to me that, if the great hopes for high economic returns to education were unfulfilled, then there would be a very strong reaction against expenditure on education. In a sense, the failure to fulfill the too high hopes, in economic terms, which were placed on education in the sixties is something we are experiencing today, as part of the public backlash, or at least part of the public questioning, about the value of higher education.

In the 1970s universities are undergoing "the qualitative revolution" in which more and more pointed questions are asked about the quality of life rather than the quantity of life. In this atmosphere, there are great opportunities for universities to say something of intrinsic worth to society. I do not agree with those professional purveyors of gloom who talk about universities as "a declining industry," — one that is doomed to financial failure and intellectual impotence. That will happen only to the extent that those responsible for university affairs let it happen, because universities are needed more than ever before. In his Installation Address, Principal Watts of Queen's University demonstrated very well that on the one hand we have a huge list of objectives in terms of social improvement and betterment of life and on the other hand universities are uniquely well-equipped to contribute to the fulfillment of those goals. Surely it is paradoxical that, at this very time, universities are under increasing financial stress, and unable to afford the kind of quality which we all believe that universities require and deserve. The question then is not: "Do we need universities?" It is: "What should universities be in the modern world?"

Meanwhile, what kind of framework do universities face in the government world? In the first place, as long as the constitutional responsibilities of Canadian Confederation remain intact and the revenue sources among the three levels of government remain unreformed, it is inevitable that education and a variety of other socially desirable activities will face financial hardship. I frankly see no relaxation in that condition throughout this decade and certainly the discussions that have taken place in Ontario — the presidents of universities and their board chairmen with the Premier, with the Minister of Colleges and Universities, and with Ministry officials — suggest that the financial outlook for universities may not get any worse, but it probably will not get much better, unless ways are found to change that outlook and change the universities' place in public priorities.

What is the basis of this austere forecast? In recent years the provincial governments have been faced with massive deficits and cash requirements far in excess relatively of those of the federal government. Most provincial governments are also committed to major transfers to the municipal level of government to offset its sole dependence on the regressive property tax. In addition, the current concern about quality of life means that massive new demands are arising within the constitutional umbrella of provincial governments. Environmental protection and enhancement, mass urban transit, preservation of agriculture land, beautification of cities, development of recreation and open space, urban renewal, and public housing are all pressing their claims. One of the last decisions in which I was involved in my own Ministry before leaving the Government was the decision to embark upon the protection of some 1.3 million acres of the Niagara Escarpment and to provide a parkway belt from Hamilton to Oshawa around Metropolitan Toronto involving an outlay of at least I billion dollars over the next few years, with more to come.

It seems to me that, in the face of these demands, education, health and the traditional social services will face exceedingly strong competition for funds.

In addition, Canadian society is at a critical turning point in terms of the whole economic process which is not really understood in terms of public policy. This is not a criticism of any government or individual. But the Western economic system is experiencing a basic and fundamental change that has not really entered into public debates or discussions. In terms of the old demand and supply factors of economics, the economic system is gradually moving into the so-called "steady state" on the supply side. Productivity is not increasing, economic growth has ceased, the concern about conservation and about the quality of life, and the questioning about ceaseless economic growth of goods and services is having a profound effect on the output side, but the demand for goods and services is still based on acquisitiveness and expectations of an increased standard of living. The simple consequence is endemic inflation. This situation is obviously imposing heavily on universities. In the case of York University for example, revenue will increase this year by 11.6%, salaries by 13%, our other basic costs of services by 15%. Obviously, there is an unbridged gap!

The question now at hand is: "Can the need and desire to re-establish the position of the university on the ladder of public priorities be reconciled with the evident shift in government policy and public attitudes away from the university?" It can be, but first certain essential ingredients in the thinking of universities are required. First of all, the necessity of reaching clear agreement on priorities, goals, and objectives must be recognized and accepted. A fundamental look must be taken at what things each university does best and where it is going. Perhaps it is easier to say this as the President of an institution that is 16 years old and still maturing, compared with the situation that often obtains in older universities. But it does pose a fundamental question of educational philosophy. What does it take to continue to be a university and to warrant the name of a university? One could presume, for example, that a Faculty of Medicine or a Faculty of Engineering is not necessary for an institution to be a university. If that is not true, then York is not a university. Could an institution be a university without having a Department of Philosophy or a Department of English, or of French Literature in this country?

The question of how resources should be distributed through the university system in the direction of greater concentration on strengths, greater complementarity and means for avoiding wasteful competition — if there is wasteful competition — is something that will demand careful and analytic consideration. We have not progressed beyond the broad generalizations which are not very helpful. For example, officials in ministries and governments say to universities that there is a lot of duplication in the university system. This proposition is not very useful unless the universities pick up that challenge and ask: "Is there duplication, and if so, is it genuine or healthy duplication of activities or courses?" Universities must answer that question for themselves as individual institutions, and collectively as a university system.

Secondly, the university must develop a greater appreciation of the issues and problems facing governments in their efforts to determine priorities. Having lived on each side of the fence, I believe there is an unhealthy tension, for example, between the Ministry of Colleges and Universities in Ontario and the province's universities. I say "unhealthy" because there is not sufficient openness, too much suspicion about motives, and an apparent unwillingness to work together for the betterment of the universities. Much more openness is needed between the universities on the one hand, and the government on the other. Much more mobility of people back and forth between the universities and government is also necessary. The adversary relationship now existing between universities and government should be replaced with a cooperative one. Finally, universities need to learn how to lobby and how to approach governments.

Universities must prepare themselves to press their case more positively and more aggressively in the public arena. Marches on the legislature — an increasing social phenomenon which has become one of increasing tedium for the ministers and officials involved — are not the course of action implied here (at the time I was leaving government service, there was serious discussion about setting up a booking agency for demonstrations because they were sometimes getting in one another's way and reducing the effectiveness of the process). The groups that universities should address are the public, the press, and the media of mass communication.

Canadians are in danger of diminishing the basic quality of their universities as a result of under-financing, but it is not sufficient to blame an uncomprehending public or an unsympathetic government. Rather, like a boxer who has over-extended himself in the ring, universities are on the ropes and are reacting to every additional body blow they receive. When a new financial formula rolls out, or when a newspaper tells universities that they can quadruple the number of people in the classrooms without impairing the quality of education, or they must tighten admission standards, they reel and react by going on the defensive.

Until the universities recover the initiative and make a positive attack on these questions, they are not going to convince the public or themselves that they should move up the priority ladder. For example, there is a very great danger today that another misapplied piece of economic jargon is being applied to higher education, and that is the term "productivity." Universities are being told by governments and editorial writers that they must increase their productivity. When one asks what increased productivity means in those terms, the answers are that the number of students in the classroom can be doubled or quadrupled, the teaching load can be increased and that the staff/ student ratio can be changed. Surely this is merely an arithmetic axiom. It tells nothing at all about the quality of education. We must deal not with productivity, but with productiveness and effectiveness. We have all had experiences suggesting that there are wide variations in the process. If good teaching is defined as the challenge to preconceived dogma, or the arousal of intellectual curiosity, or the broadening of the horizons of the mind, some of the best teaching I had as an undergraduate at the University of Toronto was in a class of 200.

I am sorry to confess that some of the worst teaching I had was in a one-to-one ratio at the University of Oxford. The main problems about the use of productivity are that it is based on a narrow definition of the role of the university, and may lead to either a reaction or compliance which ultimately is not in the best interests of the university.

There are those who attack on the ground of the under-utilization of universities or of teaching but at the same time say that the universities are too large, too anonymous and not paying enough attention to the individual students. These persons would have it both ways. And indeed just using the ratios ignores the whole process of the extra classroom responsibilities of faculty members for supervision and so on. It certainly ignores the other fundamental responsibilities of the university in terms of scholarship, research, and public service. It involves a dangerous, narrowing tendency for the public perception of the university.

In the same manner, universities are being told — or it is being suggested to them — that they should reduce enrolments and tighten admission standards. There are varying views among university presidents on this question, depending largely on whether or not their institutions have matured in the sense of having reached optimum size or desired goals. But the proposition that, by some arithmetic yardstick, one might arbitrarily reduce opportunities for admission to university or change admission standards is disconcerting because all of the problems of equality of educational opportunity in this country have not been solved. For example, I am not convinced that we have achieved equality of opportunity among potential university entrants, particularly people who have language handicaps but are otherwise well-equipped to do university work. I am not convinced that all of those things that can be done through the school system have been done to ensure that those in a position to benefit from and contribute to university are getting there.

Moreover, it is impossible to answer the question what should university enrolment be and what should admission standards be, until the role and function for the universities in Canada are defined. What are these roles and functions in terms of the choice between continuing with mass education or returning to a more restrictive academy? What are they in terms of the choice between greater emphasis on general education as opposed to occupational preparation? What are they in terms of increasing the inflow of students from the final year of high school as opposed to increasing the number of persons who return to university life continuously or at advanced stages of maturity? Until universities are able to answer some of these questions more effectively, it will be very difficult to deal with the "means" question. More important, until universities answer some of these questions they will continue to reel on the ropes under the public onslaught.

The people of this country are not anti-education. The basic belief in the importance of education is as strong and as fundamental as ever. But there are basic questions about whether or not universities clearly know where they should go, what their goals and objectives are, and how they should best get there.

In 1956, Canadian universities faced a problem different from that which they face today. The problem then was that a virtual tidal wave of postwar babies would arrive at the universities' doors in the late 1950s and 1960s and that there would be a need to adapt the university system quickly to deal with those numbers. The National Conference of Canadian Universities held a national meeting in Ottawa in 1956 on "the crisis in higher education." It is interesting to read the proceedings of this Conference, because it did have a significant effect on the direction of public policy in Canada. It is evident from a review of the recommendations and discussions of that Conference, and from subsequent occurrences that the universities did seize the initiative and did chart a course for themselves that has served them and the country well.

Another national conference on the future of Canadian universities should be convened before the end of 1976. Such a conference would be a first step towards answering the questions about the roles and functions of universities in Canadian society over the next ten years.

A national conference will not solve all of the universities' problems. But we should return to some of the basic questions about fundamental philosophy of the university system and university education, which have been ignored recently. A national conference would enable universities to recapture the initiative and then assume a stronger position from which to convince the public and governments that once again universities merit their continuing and indeed increasing support.

In every decision which bears on the broad policy of the university a question should be asked about whether or not the university system is destined to have more government interference in its operation. Although one should have no illusions that, in a publicly funded university system, governments have no role in the system, it is nevertheless fundamentally important for universities to retain and enhance in every possible way whatever degree of self-determination or autonomy is available to them. In most decisions taken about universities, one should ask whether or not these decisions are going to contribute to this end. Questions about autonomy lead to other questions. These are two especially important examples. How long can universities go on incurring deficits? There is a point of view held by some persons which contends that the university should not worry about this, but should go on incurring deficits because eventually the government will bail them out. It is inconceivable, that if all the universities in Ontario, for example, were to incur increasingly large deficits, at some point the Government would not feel obliged to introduce some form of trustee arrangement, and play a direct role in the academic decision-making of the university.

The second question has to do with the prospect of faculty unionization, which is on the horizon and, in some instances, closer than on the horizon. Collective bargaining and unionization is a hard-earned right in Canadian society and, indeed, is a basic right of any group of people. Faculties themselves must decide on this question. But it is imperative that there be every opportunity for the faculty to debate the issue, to understand the implications, and to consider the potential advantages and disadvantages and the ultimate results. This can become a complicated and painful procedure.

At York University, support staff have recently had a bargaining unit determined for them under the Ontario Labour Relations Act. When one tries to apply a statute that was born in the copper mines and on the assembly lines to a culture such as that in the university, which has a highly decentralized form of management, the institution experiences cultural shock. Similarly, there is a passage in the Ontario Labour Relations Act which says that any employee who has any influence over the salary, promotion, discharge or other terms of employment of a fellow employee is part of management and is not eligible for the union. Faculties should consider very carefully and take all available advice about the potential implications of unionization for the whole collegial process of peer evaluation, promotion, and tenure, under which universities have lived for 700 years.

In all that has been said here, nothing has been said about the Canadian federal government: this is one of the difficult questions of public policy. We all understand two things: ultimately universities are a national resource and, therefore, the federal government should bear some public responsibility for their welfare. We all also understand our constitution and the ultimate responsibilities of the provincial governments. The federal government must be persuaded to do more and to take a larger role. The Fiscal Arrangements Act, whereby the federal financial resources for the purposes of higher education are transferred through the tax mechanism to the provincial treasuries, will shortly come up for review. These discussions should not be just arithmetic exercises about the size of the funds and manner of handling them. The universities should have a strong positive position on their educational needs to place before the federal government and the provinces. Twenty years ago, universities were in a position to speak with a direct voice to the ministers and to the political men and women who ultimately were responsible for decisions about higher education. Since then strong and powerful bureaucracies dealing with university and educational matters have been built up in both the provincial and federal governments. It is not only strong university presidents or influential faculty groups who make their presence known to politicians, but there also are very strong counter-bureaucracies, as it were, that are also advising governments and with which universities must deal and reckon. These large bureaucracies often have resources which the universities simply cannot muster.

A story is told about a former student who came to visit his old Professor of Economics after fifteen years and happened to notice a copy of the current examination paper lying on the desk. He glanced over it and said to the professor: "You know that is very interesting. If I recall, those are exactly the same questions you asked us in our examination fifteen years ago." The professor said, "Oh yes, I ask the same questions every year," and the former student asked, "Well, don't your students get wise to the system?" to which he replied, "Of course, but it does not matter because in Economics we keep changing the answers!"

Both the questions and the answers are now changing very rapidly in matters of public policy and in the area of the relationship of universities and government. It is critically important that the universities retain a capacity to play a part in the asking of the questions and in providing of the answers. There is a very great danger, in a mood of retrenchment, in a concern and anxiety about the future, and in a stance of reacting to body blows rather than taking the initiative, that three forces may overcome universities at once — the force of collectivism, the force of conservatism, and the force of protectionism. Universities should prepare themselves to counter them all.

University Presidents and the Politicians*

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Abstract

This commentary does not deal with politicians within the university or at the federal or municipal levels, limiting itself to persons, whether elected or appointed, in government office at the provincial level. In addition to the university's "primary" area of interaction with government (Universities minister, Grants Commission, Premier), there is an important "secondary" area (for example, Health, Agriculture, Energy and Resources, Industry, Labour, etc.) where there must be co-operation but where differing responsibilities imply different objectives. Examples are given to show that on the government side there has in recent years been a diminishing concern to prevent such differences from becoming clashes. In the "primary" sector the direction in which the relationship has moved in recent years has been downward. Public reaction against the universities and disunity within them have combined to invite government infringement upon university autonomy and abridgement of commitments; examples are given. The reasons for the absence of public protest are analyzed. A general conclusion is that a university's relations with government reflect primarily the realities of power and influence of the moment.

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Résumé

Les présidents d'université et les politicians

La communication présente ne traite ni de politicians au sein de l'université, ni de ceux aux niveaux fédéral ou municipal. Elle se limite aux personnes, soit élues soit nommées, détenant des postes au niveau provincial. Outre le domaine "primaire" d'action réciproque entre l'université et le gouvernement (ministre responsable des Universités, commissions de subventions, premier ministre), il existe un domaine "secondaire" (par example, la Santé, l'agriculture, l'énergie et les Resources, l'industriel, le Travail) où savère essentielle une collaboration entre les deux. Pourtant, ici, il s'agit de diverses responsabilités impliquant des objectifs différents. On donne des exemples pour illustrer que, du côté du gouvernement, les efforts vont en se diminuant pour éviter que de telles differences ne deviennent des conflits. Au secteur "primaire," les rapports université/gouvernement reculent dequis quelques années. La réaction publique unfavorable à l'égard des universités et le manque d'unité chez celles-ci encouragent le gouvernement, à empieter sur l'autonomie des universités et à diminuer ses engagements vis à vis de ces institutions. Là-dessus, l'auteur donne des exemples. Il fait aussi une analyse du raisonnement qui explique l'absence de protestation publique. Une conclusion globale: les rapports entre l'université et le gouvernement reflètent surtout les réalités du pouvoir et des influences au moment donné.

I

The title of this series poses an initial question of scope. Taking "politicians" in an only slightly extended sense, the university itself is full of politicians. The university's favorite metaphor of itself is "a community of scholars," and as members of a quasi-community the university's staff and students stand in a quasi-political relation with each other and with the whole. Those with a responsibility on behalf of others — administrators, staff and student leaders — may, from this point of view, be thought of as "politicians;" and the greater such responsibility — vested or voluntary, actual or pursued — the more "political" (other things being equal) will its holder or seeker be. In this sense, every time the president, himself inescapably "political," deals with a dean or department head, a spokesman for the Faculty Association or the Student's Union, or a representative of any of the myriad recognizable interests in the university, he is dealing with a "politician." This is a fascinating story (I'm sometimes unsure whether to think it a comedy with tragic aspects or a tragedy with a comic subplot), instructive and well worth the telling, but it must await its turn. For the present I will take "politicians" only in the sense of persons involved in government.

This still leaves us with far too large a subject to manage in one lecture, so I will set aside federal and municipal politics, although these too constitute stories worth telling, and limit myself wholly to provincial politics. Further, in an act of great self-denial, I will refrain from including politicians in Opposition or private members on the government side, although this means foregoing the comedy of the irresponsible, or rather of those without responsible office (I do not say that it means foregoing the theatre of the absurd). My lecture thus limits the scope of "politicians" to those, whether elected or appointed, in government office at the provincial level.

I think most people, in considering the title "University Presidents and the Politicians" as I've just delimited it, would envision university presidents individually or in formed committees interacting with their respective Ministers of University Affairs (or Higher Education, or whatever the nomenclature of the province), and, less frequently, with their provincial premiers. Deputy ministers and other civil servants would be involved, but these are not politicians, are they? In most provinces a committee or commission advisory to government would also be involved, but again these are not supposed to be political. Other politicians might involve themselves from time to time, chiefly when the estimates of the Department of University Affairs are being debated, but their relation to the university president would be occasional and remote. The canvas would not appear very crowded.

This picture, which rises out of the usual constitutional arrangements for universities in Canada, may correspond to the actual situation of some universities of narrow scope. But in most major universities, particularly those which used to be called the "provincial" universities and which still have all or most of the professional faculties in the province, it corresponds to only a part of the situation — albeit the central part — and the university's (or the university president's) other interactions with politicians are significant both in their own right and also because they influence this primary or "constitutional" interaction. It will therefore be useful to defer our treatment of the "primary" interaction until we have some sense of the range and nature of these "secondary" interactions. To get the richest mix of implications, let us postulate a situation (true in most provinces) where the "provincial" university comprises the bulk of the pool of research and consulting expertise regularly and locally available to government.

The most obvious of the additional areas of government to interact with such universities is the Department of Health, which characteristically contributes substantially to the teaching and research costs of the Faculty of Medicine, and on occasion to such faculties as Dentistry, Nursing, and Pharmacy. It also controls the entry into and the conditions of practice in these professions, and is usually their largest single employer. Another area of Government which typically makes substantial and regular contributions to a professional sector and employs many of its graduates is the Department of Agriculture, which relates directly to such faculties as Agriculture, Engineering, and, where there is one, Veterinary Science; indeed, the Faculty of Agriculture sometimes contractually constitutes the research arm of the provincial Department of Agriculture. I am not personally familiar with the arrangements where forestry and fisheries are the major resource industries, but I understand they are roughly comparable.

Next is a group of Government departments whose financial contributions are less regular and usually rise out of particular projects, but which are in virtually constant interaction with particular university sectors. Energy, Mines, and Resources (nomenclature and organization vary among provinces) depends heavily upon the Faculty of Engineering and the Department of Earth Science, and to a lesser extent upon departments of Landscape Architecture and Planning. Departments such as Highways, Urban Affairs, Housing, and Industry rely upon the same group of faculties and in varying degrees also upon the Faculty of Administrative Studies and the departments of Economics, Geography, Psychology, Applied Mathematics and Statistics. Welfare relates to the School of Social Work and the Department of Psychology, as does the Department of Corrections, which also relates to the Faculty of Law.

Next is a group of government departments whose financial contributions are limited but which have strong and direct professional interdependence with specific faculties: the Department of Education with the Faculties of Education and Physical Education, the Attorney-General's Department with the Faculty of Law.

Then there are some Government departments, such as Northern Development, Native Peoples, Tourism, Recreation, and Culture, whose contributions and requirements vary greatly in significance from year to year, and often traverse a number of university sectors.

A relatively recent but now crucial involvement is that of the Department of Labour. It has certain needs which relate it to specific university sectors (for example, Administrative Studies, Law, Economics), but since the advent of unionization in universities it is particularly interested in the university as employer.

This list (in which I have made no attempt to be comprehensive), when added to the primary” or “constitutional” involvement of the Universities Minister, the advisory committee, and the Premier, may suggest that virtually all departments of the provincial government are involved with the university (and the university president). That would not be much of an exaggeration, for even those which are not directly involved as exemplified here are, I am told, sometimes vociferous enough in Cabinet when spending or policy is determined.

II

A university's “secondary” relations with government must involve an element of conflict — if not of persons then at least of interests — because even while the parties are working together their responsibilities differ greatly. With determined goodwill and sustained deference to the other side's needs such differences of interest can be prevented from becoming clashes between persons and therefore between the institutions, but this requires adequate motivation, and it will be a theme of this lecture that on the government side such motivation has been on the wane in recent years.

Let us look at some ways in which conflicts in the “secondary” sector may develop. Given the multiplicity of provincial departments with regular or occasional interests in one or other university sector, and the marked preference of government departments for acting on their own rather than channeling their money through a sister (and perhaps competing) department, there will be a tendency for direct lines to develop between government departments and university units, bypassing both the Minister of University Affairs and the university president until some contract or grant requires the latter's approval. Unless the proposed contract clearly violates university policy, this is a bad stage at which to stop it, since expectations will have been raised, plans laid, and often anticipatory money spent or commitments made. On the other hand, each time a contract which has run such a course is approved the path is smoothed for further unreported negotiations leading to *faits accomplis,* until the point is reached where the coherence of the university, the direction of its development, and the balance of its parts are at risk, and to protect them it becomes necessary to assert the timely presence of the central administration. If, as is likely, this is done by a new president, unencumbered by previous *ex post facto* approvals, suspicion and resentment are immediately aroused on both the government and university sides: does the new man mean to withdraw the university into an ivory tower? or, if he means it to retain a service function, does he intend to seize all power for his office?

Let us assume that after some time the president has succeeded in having referred to his office for early scrutiny all major proposals that seem to have a chance of materializing. To allay the suspicion and resentment which the inauguration of such a procedure will cause, he is likely to lean over backward to try to support projects a faculty wants. Some will give him no trouble: there are research and service agreements in effect which bring important benefits to both sides, with few if any adverse consequences. But many proposals will give him trouble: trouble of one sort if he approves, trouble of another sort if he doesn't. Suppose, for example, an inherently desirable protect is jointly developed by a government department and a university faculty and put forward as a three-year pilot — to put, let us say, a field section of Social Work into a remote northern area full of social problems. The university would learn a good deal about northern social conditions, the northern community would benefit, a promising educational experiment would be undertaken; and the only real criticism is that funding beyond the initial three years is not in the proposed contract. The government department explains unofficially that it is against policy to make longer commitments, but that if the experiment goes well continued support may be expected. If the president holds out for firmer guarantees he is likely to thwart a good undertaking, frustrate the faculty, and alienate an influential government department. He will probably accept the financial risk. Three years later, when the experiment is seen to be successful, the university may be told that the financial situation has changed, the Government department must retrench, no funds are available to subsidize the project further, and the university ought to regard it as an established feature of its program to be carried on its own budget. Of course if the government is retrenching it is all too likely that the university is already feeling the results directly, and carrying the project on its own budget will be at the expense of its established operations. Nevertheless, since winding the project up would be an educational loss and would upset the faculty, hurt the affected communities, and anger the government (and not only the department in question), the likelihood is that the university will keep the project doing at its own cost, with some of its other operations diminished.

To take another kind of situation: suppose a Government department refuses to recognize an important element of university policy — let us say its commitment to the freedom of publication by its researchers of the results of their research. Suppose the difference surfaces only after a highly desirable but politically explosive project is well under way say an impact study of the proposed flooding, for hydroelectric development, of an area populated by native peoples. Suppose this has led to a hard, damaging struggle, partly public. in which the university manages to maintain its position, but despite this outcome the government department continues to reject the university's policy of research openness. Suppose a later joint venture is proposed, again an inherently desirable one, and the university insists this time on spelling out in advance the policy of openness and its practical implementation; there may well be a threatening and punitive response from the government department.

There may also be proposals which are simply unacceptable and would never be considered were it not that they emanate from government. Suppose a Government department has, at substantial cost and using independently contracted personnel, developed a special instructional package, say on labour history and economics, designed for a particular target, such as remote-area industrial workers, and then, finding that the targeted consumers are not interested unless they get university credit for the course, tries to arrange with one of the province's universities to give such credit. Suppose that university's senate rejects the proposal because of certain biases and defects in the material, and the department tries the other universities, whose presidents reject it. An offer by the universities to provide, at cost and for academic credit, the kind of instruction desired, but using the universities' own staffs and materials (including anything academically acceptable in the specially-prepared package) is unlikely to allay the resentment of the thwarted department.

An opposite situation leading to conflict is where one government department, say Education, makes an essentially good decision, for example to increase the academic requirements for public-school teacher certification, and then its sister department of University Affairs refuses to assist the university in meeting the resultant increase in workload (for the "provincial" university cannot think of refusing such a burden). The university, which may not have been properly consulted about the action, is likely to find the situation particularly galling if the same minister presides over both departments.

In some jurisdictions government ideology may be a fruitful source of conflict, for example where the Minister of Labour is seen by most of the government's supporters (and sees himself) as the Minister *for* labour, particularly organized labour. Because of its history and nature, the university is likely everywhere to be the slowest really large employer to be unionized. In a particular university there may also have been, at an earlier time (or it may be suspected that there were), deliberate efforts to prevent unionization. If so, when a new thrust for unionization comes, most likely first from the non-academic staff, organizers are likely to want the open assistance of the Labour Minister, which may come in a very rough form. Assistance in the unionization of the academic staff, which may be demanded next, may require more than blunderbuss attacks on the university (although these may well continue); among other things it may require legislation, with attendant hearings and debates, and perhaps protracted proceedings in the Department's Labour Board. After unionization there may be further occasions for assisting unions during negotiations and strikes, all of which is likely to add materially to the tension between the Department and the university, or at least those sectors of the university not favored by the Department.

Another example of conflict bred of ideology may be found in those jurisdictions where there is a history of mistrust between the governing party and certain professions. The health area is a particularly visible, although by no means unique, example. If a no-deterrent, fully government-paid medicare system has been installed, there will probably have been government pressure for great and rapid expansion of the medical faculty. When the costs grow burdensome, however, a government suspicious of the medical profession is likely to try to force reductions in the earnings and changes in the method of compensation for the full- and part-time medical faculty, to change the Faculty's distribution of specialties and the balance between specialists and generalists, and to reduce the number of research fields and the attention and space devoted to research. Hostility between the government and the medical profession will make the president's involvement in such issues all the more difficult.

These are some examples of how conflict may develop between the university and those departments which constitute the university's "secondary" involvement with government. Sometimes the president will be seen by the government department as the cause of conflict, particularly when it is he who says no to a proposal or insists upon implementing university policy against the wishes of a minister. But whether the president is seen in this way or not, ministers who have been in conflict with the university, or whose departments have been, are not very likely to urge their colleague the Minister of University Affairs to be generous in the grant to the university, or advise restraint in any harsh measures he wishes to take beyond the financial area. There will usually also be examples of successful co-operation and good relations in the secondary sector, but in my own experience the conflicts rising from this sector were much the more influential in determining the government's attitude toward the University. It is possible that this was due to local factors and accidents of personality, but I think that ministerial conflict with a faculty or with the president is always more likely to be generalized into hostility to the university than ministerial co-operation into support for the university as a whole.

III

I turn now to the "primary" sector of the university's involvement with government, the Ministry of University Affairs, the advisory committee, and the Premier. I have time only to illustrate what in my experience has been the main trend of recent years. Were I to give a balanced account of the whole relationship there would be a number of positive aspects to report, particularly in the opening years of the decade, but all I can hope to do in the remainder of this paper is indicate the direction in which the relationship has moved, which is downward.

It is now an old story that the hopes of much of society focused during the late 1950s and much of the 1960s on education, particularly higher education. As a result, universities acquired great influence with governments, which expected to use them for both social and political gains. In addition to this direct influence of the universities there was their indirect power through their influence with the public: governments were very wary of incurring voter disapproval either by holding back on university support or by taking actions which might be denounced by universities as harmful to their nature or function. (At the time, most segments of the university community were still reasonably united in their view of how Government should relate to the universities, although some students and support staff were beginning to depart from this consensus.) Accordingly, in addition to giving universities a steadily increasing share of resources, Governments went to great lengths to avoid the appearance of interfering with universities, and to almost equal lengths to avoid the reality. Certainly I found this to be true in Ontario, and I believe it was true in most other provinces. When I went to Manitoba in 1970, where a new government had recently been elected, the Minister of Colleges and Universities Affairs told me, only half in jest, that he understood he was not supposed even to phone me lest it seem an intervention. On several occasions in the next year or so he spoke of his unwillingness to take actions which some successor less committed to university autonomy could treat as precedents for a policy of intervention.

But by the early 1970s the reaction which had begun with the radical student movement of the 1960s and was intensified by other forms of campus strife and by the underemployment of university graduates, the slowing of enrolment growth, the universities' increased contribution to the tax burden, and other factors, had stripped the universities of much of their magic in the public eye, and with it a good deal of their influence with politicians and governments. Furthermore, the earlier near-consensus of the university community about how government should relate to the universities had largely disintegrated, and some voices within the universities were calling for governments to intervene in various ways in matters which had been earlier thought to be internal responsibilities. These voices could be heard in Manitoba as elsewhere, and the response to one such call of the Minister of Universities Affairs (the same person who had two or three years earlier been so scrupulous about university autonomy) is most instructive.

A difficult and painful tenure case had disturbed the University of Manitoba for almost two years. A negative decision, taken on the recommendation of the departmental and faculty tenure committees, had been appealed (as provided for under the University of Manitoba Act) to the Board of Governors, and after a marathon hearing the Board had sustained the withholding of tenure but ruled that there be a special twelve-month extension of appointment, with a new tenure hearing before a new committee. Getting a new committee within the university seemed impossible because of the narrowness of the specialty and the number of persons who had already been involved, so a proposal was made to the Board for an Advisory Committee from outside. This was approved, and in due course the committee visited the University, made its assessment, and advised negatively; the faculty tenure committee, by now reconstituted according to the request of the Faculty Association as modified by Senate, supported the recommendation, and tenure was once again denied. The candidate, supported by the Faculty Association, asked the Board to hear another appeal, and the Board, pointing out that under the Act it had a discretion on hearing appeals and that its intention in arranging a new tenure hearing by a new committee would be frustrated if it thereafter heard a new appeal, rejected the request. The Executive of the Faculty Association, accompanied by the Executive Secretary of the Canadian Association of University Teachers, then went to the Minister, argued that the decision by the Board not to hear a second appeal was unjust, said that if the Faculty Association achieved unionization it would insist that such matters go to binding arbitration by an external panel, and asked him to require the University to submit to such an arbitration in the present case. The Minister urgently summoned the Chancellor and me (he was unwilling to wait until the Chairman of the Board, who lived out of town, could arrive), informed us of the Faculty Association–CAUT action, said that he had not intended to intervene but the Faculty Association request had changed his mind, said that he didn't doubt the University's integrity but that "justice must not only be done but also be seen to be done," and asked the University forthwith to submit the case to arbitration. If it did not do so, he said, he would; he had not looked to see whether he had the legal power, but if he hadn't he would get it, which would have much graver consequences for the University's autonomy than a "voluntary" use of arbitration. I asked why, if what the Faculty Association wanted was justice, it didn't use the courts, a procedure widely followed elsewhere in such matters and one which might circumscribe but did not threaten university autonomy and the special and valuable status of tenure. His reply was prompt and revealing: because the professor "wouldn't stand a chance in court."

When all this was reported to an emergency meeting of the Board of Governors, it decided that the damage to the University of submitting to the Minister's will, although great, was less than would otherwise ensue. I will not trouble you with the extreme difficulty then encountered in reaching an arbitration agreement, the University finding itself dealing with three parties simultaneously who were not always in accord: the professor (whose salary was, at the Minister's demand, continued, although he had no duties), the Faculty Association, and the CAUT. When, after a very long time, and acting always through legal counsel on both sides, the agreement was completed, each side named a member of the panel and the Chief Justice of Canada named the chairman. There were lengthy hearings, conducted over a two-month period. The decision, when it finally came, was unanimous: even the complainant's nominee agreed that tenure should not be given. Since the case had given the University a great deal of bad publicity and cost it an enormous amount of money, time, and turmoil (along with even more serious consequences), I sent the report to the man who had been the Universities Minister at the time (he had since been moved to another portfolio). He wrote back a three-liner congratulating the

University: "justice had both been done and been seen to be done!" He did not offer to compensate the University for the costs of this visibility.

It is important to recognize that what is involved is a change in attitude, not just a disposition to intervene (although that may also have been present). There are many evidences that there was such a change; I choose one because of its illuminating chronology. In 1970 a joint Board/Senate Committee recommended an increase in tuition fees. There was not at the time much financial pressure on the University, but some members of the Board, anticipating that there would be, thought the recommendation should be implemented. Others were unconvinced, and some thought it would be contrary to government wishes and therefore counter-productive. At a meeting with the Universities Grants Commission we asked whether the Commission or the government had a position on the matter. The UGC's answer was that fees were in the jurisdiction of the University. At the time I thought a fee increase unwise, and the Board accepted this view. By 1972 the financial situation had changed enough for the question to be raised again with the UGC, since despite the earlier response it would be imprudent to increase fees contrary to Government wishes. The answer was superficially the same: it was up to the University. There were, however, some indirect indications that a fee increase would not be welcome to the Government, and the University took no action. In the following year, when the University was experiencing considerable financial pressure, there was renewed discussion of a possible increase, Manitoba's fees being by that time considerably lower than most. In a newspaper interview the Minister (the same man who had a few years earlier been so scrupulous about the University's autonomy) stated that "unequivocally there will not be any tuition fee increases"! The University learned about this from the newspaper story, and the university community, together with the public, drew appropriate inferences about the government's changed attitude, not only toward the University's autonomy but toward the University itself, to which it could find no less damaging a way to reveal its will than through the press.

My most educational encounter with politicians was very complex and protracted, and fully reflected the changing Government attitude. During 1973 inflation was heating up, the unionization of the support staff was in effect completed, and that of the faculty was slowly moving forward. In October there was a 23-day strike of the second-largest union, and the settlement affected all staff costs. The University made appropriate representations to the UGC concerning increased operating costs for the coming year, explaining that the alternative, a reduction in staff, would not only mean a decline in quality, but would be regarded as intimidation by the new and nascent unions, and arguing that by comparison with other major universities the University of Manitoba was underfunded and its salary structure too low. When the grant for 1974–1975 was announced the Board of Governors, the majority of whom were government appointees, took the position that it was inadequate, and that to remain within it would mean a serious decline in the quality of the University, which the government had not indicated that it intended. The Board therefore adopted a "Phase One budget" which implied a large deficit for the coming year if salary settlements approximated current levels, and sent the Chairman and me to brief the Chairman of the UGC and then see the Minister (no longer the man involved in the incidents reported earlier), explain the situation to him, and report his reaction to the Board.

After we had briefed the Chairman and Vice-chairman of the UGC, we met with the Minister. When we had put the full situation before him, emphasizing the deficit implications of the Board's action and the alternatives, and explaining that we were to report his response to the Board, he said that the government did not desire a reduction in the quality of the University and that he was not disturbed by our budget plan. He told us of parallel situations (some of which had in fact influenced the Board's discussion); for example, he pointed out that the province's major hospital had been left in a potential deficit position until its negotiations with its unions were finished, and then been given a supplementary grant to enable it to meet the new levels; and he mentioned other analogous situations. So far as the University was concerned, he said, "if we have to go into deficit financing, we'll go into deficit financing."

We reported the Minister's response to the Board and the implementation of the budget began. The Chairman of the UGC started at once to work with our financial officers analyzing the most recent years from budget to expenditure, and told me just before his retirement at the end of June that he was getting the information he needed. However, we heard nothing through the summer, so in September a delegation of the Board met with the Minister and the Acting-Chairman of the UGC (the former Vice-Chairman), and formally requested that the Minister underwrite the deficit he had encouraged and bring the level of University funding to that of the expenditure we had previously shown him. Ten days later we got his reply: if we had a financial problem we should approach the UGC!

When we asked the UGC for a meeting they said that first they required new financial analyses for recent years, this time budget-to-budget. These took us two months working flat out to supply. Finally, late in December (three-quarters through the fiscal year), they saw us. They asked why, knowing that we were developing a deficit, we had not reduced our level of expenditure. When we replied by reporting the position taken in April by the Minister, the UGC said it had not been advised to that effect by the Minister.

At the end of February, after consultation with government, the UGC (whose new Chairman had until two months earlier been the University's senior financial officer) announced its decision: it would assume half the deficit and give us five years to liquidate the other half, provided, among other conditions, we balanced the budget in fiscal 1975–1976 (a month away). Taking into account the impact of the grant for 1975–1976, announced at the same meeting, and comparing it with the level of current expenditures, we concluded that we would have to get almost $4 million out of the base for the immediately upcoming budget before allowing for salary and other essential increases. Because we had no option, we tried to do it, and one of the results was that we were unable to prevent a strike of our largest support staff union, due in part to a feeling of insecurity which affected everyone. There were other results, but I need not go into them here.

After some weeks the strike became a serious worry to government, for it loomed very large in the Manitoba context: in its 45 days it amounted to about one-seventh of all man-days lost in the province through strike or lockout action during the whole of 1975. Besides, although the essential work of the University continued, there was considerable turmoil on the campus, including some fairly spectacular incidents. There had therefore been growing demands that the Premier either settle the strike or make it possible for the University to do so. Finally, on April 25, the strikers marched on the Legislature demanding to see him; but at that moment he was, together with the Minister and the Chairman of the UGC, meeting with the Vice-Chairman of the Board and me, and an accommodation was worked out, subject however to being recommended by the UGC. It involved reducing the budget base (and with it of course the quality of the University) but spreading the required reduction about equally over two budgets instead of insisting on the ruinous instantaneity of the February dictum; and there would be a supplementary grant to meet the resultant deficit in the upcoming year. On the strength of this understanding we were able to come to terms with the striking union. The understanding seemed imperilled several times during the following weeks (when the strike was settled the government's concern seemed to diminish), but in the end it held, and on June 20 the University was officially told that it could proceed with its budget for the fiscal year then already a quarter finished, and that the further substantial deficit it showed would be met by a supplementary grant.

For me this denouement of a turbulent and damaging, but highly instructive, action came just in time. I believe that when a university president voluntarily retires from office he should give a full year's notice to enable the university to find and install a successor without an interregnum; and my appointment period ran from July 1. With the strike settled (and on reasonable terms), the deficit budget and supplementary grant approved, the term for the liquidation of the remainder of the carry over deficit extended to ten years, and the internal situation much calmed, I felt that I had recovered a personal freedom of choice which I could not have exercised during a crisis; and the crucial letter confirming the government's decision was in hand with ten days to spare before the talismanic twelve-month period would begin. I promptly gave my year's notice. I felt that I had completed my general education in university-government relations. During the following year I did have something of a postgraduate course, but I will not try to include anything from it here.

The most significant and ominous thing about the events I've narrated is that they brought no great outcry, either from the general public or even (except concerning the tightness of funds) from the campus itself. This quiescence has a number of causes. In the case of the general public there is the reaction beginning in the late 1960s to which I've already referred, with its multiple sources. As this reaction gained momentum it revealed, and strengthened, an always powerful current of anti-intellectualism in the society, characteristically hostile to what it sees as unfounded pretensions on the part of the university (such as autonomy, academic freedom, and certain employment practices), and quick to believe that anyway the university is too expensive. For this sector of the public the spectacle of the "over-privileged" university getting its comeuppance was not unattractive. Certain elements in the media shared this position and catered to it, not always with much regard to accuracy or proportion, and, as is often the way with the media, devising villains and heroes. Many less hostile members of the public were kept neutral by the bad publicity, especially concerning the purported tax burden. There were some friends of the University willing to take a more supportive view, and a very few spoke out, but most were puzzled and deterred by the cross-currents in the university community itself, emphasized and exaggerated as they were by the media.

These internal differences were related to differences of interest. For example, although a resolution was adopted in Senate condemning the Minister's imposition of arbitration in the tenure case, it was naturally opposed by the Faculty Association, which had sought the action, and therefore was seen from outside (and especially by government) less as a protest against the invasion of university autonomy than as part of the struggle over faculty unionization. Again, there were denunciations of the Minister's dictum on tuition fees, but many student representatives were pleased by it and said so, and certain other groups, which wanted the Student Union's or the Minister's support for their own ends, also defended it. As for the long drawn-out budget issue, the clash and swirl of interest and faction were almost infinitely varied, encompassing the hostilities engendered by two major strikes, the polarization accompanying the partial unionization of the faculty, and panic fears and struggles which broke out when the paper deficit suddenly turned into a real financial crisis. In short, at a time of great change in the University, many divergent interests were struggling for preponderance and advantage, some of them using tactics which were effective for their immediate purpose but seriously weakened the university's influence with both public and government, and therefore left it more exposed to pressure and reduced the support it could expect.

For if I have a general conclusion to draw from my experiences with politicians it is that (with allowance made for exceptional individuals) a university's relations with government (or a university president's with the "politicians") reflect primarily the realities of power and influence of the moment. A corollary of this is that if politicians or governments do not wish to be bound by earlier commitments their promises are unenforceable by universities at a time of low influence.

University Presidents and Politicians

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Abstract

It is customary to think of the ideal university president as being necessarily opposed to the methods and aims of the public politician. If, as Thorstein Veblen argued, he adopts those methods and aims, he betrays the university and becomes, in effect, the head of a corporation or a minor state. It is the argument of this paper, however, that the president can lead and direct the University only if he accepts a political role, and strives to establish a high place for the university among public priorities. At the University of Toronto (and at other Canadian universities in varying degrees and in varying ways), the president was not able to play this political role until the great expansion of the 1960s. Then, the need for long-range planning brought the presidents into the political arena. At the same time, internal stresses led to the creation of more representative governing bodies within the universities, and made the president a political figure who must strive to achieve a central alliance within the academic community.

Résumé

Les présidents d'université et les politiciens

On a l'habitude de penser que le président d'université idéal soit nécessairement opposé aux méthodes et aux objectifs des politicians publics. Si, tel qu'a raisonné Thorstein Veblen, il adopte ces méthodes et ces objectifs, il trahit l'université et devient, en effet, le chef d'une corporation ou d'un état mineur. Cet essai, cependant, suit le raisonnement suivant: le président est en mesure de guider et de diriger l'université seulement s'il accepte un rôle politique et s'il oeuvre pour que l'on accorde à l'université un rang important parmi les priorités publiques. A l'université de Toronto (ainsi qu'à d'autres universités canadiennes à de divers degrés et dans de diverses façons), le président n'avait pas été en mesure de jouer ce rôle politique jusqu'au dévéloppement vaste et rapide des années 1960. À ce moment-là, le besoin de planification à long terme a amené les présidents d'université dans l'arène politique. En même temps, les tensions internes ont mené la création des corps gouvernants plus représentatifs à l'intérieur de l'université et ont pousse le président à devenir un homme politique obligé d'oeuvrer pour la réalisation d'une alliance centrale à l'interieur de la communauté académique.

When we think of politicians, we think, first of all, of those who live and work outside the university. The popular connotation of the word, which carries with it, at best, a touch of knowing cynicism and, at worst, an element of the dark and circuitous, discounts its noble lineage. For politicians are people who engage actively in politics, and politics in a democracy is the art of ordering a society so as to enable the individual to live in peace, security, enlightenment and freedom — surely one of the most honourable of all activities, and not one that should create a barrier between politicians and the heads of institutions of higher learning. But implicit in the title, and sustained by history, is the existence of a tension between politicians and universities. It is, first of all, the tension that inevitably exists between those who make the final decisions and those who must obey them. And when a university has been, as almost all the universities of Canada have been in varying degrees, dependent upon the state (usually the provincial government), for the means to carry on its work, the tension is persistent. But the tension goes beyond the provision of resources; it is not simply a question of the son denied the allowance he believes he requires for the full exercise of his manifold talents, or, perhaps more accurately, the head of an influential department in a corporation denied the budget he believes is essential for the carrying out of his crucial task; the tension arises from a difference in methods and goals. The politician finds that, more often than not, he must make short-term decisions. He cannot wait for all the evidence to come in, or, even for a considered review of the available evidence. He must make decisions and act upon them, and he subscribes to the military injunction that any action is better than no action. Moreover, he must pay attention to the opinions and prejudices of those who elected and, he hopes, will elect him when, in one, two, three, or four years he again hazards his fortunes at the polls. Insofar as the President of a university is an academic and speaks for academics he will bring a different perspective to the examination of events. Insofar as he is an academic, he believes that he should wait patiently for the full accumulation of evidence before he makes a decision, and he sees himself not only as a citizen of his province and Canada, but of an international world of scholarship. Theoretically, then, as scholar he brings the perspective of time and universality to the contemplation of events. Certain qualifications to this serene picture enter the mind. The academic is usually concerned with past events. The evidence is in, and conveniently stored, and whatever he says can have no effect upon what has happened. And when he pronounces upon contemporary events, whether it be a new novel, the phenomenon of stagnation, the extent of energy resources, or the prospects of a political party, his judgments do not have the cool infallibility that the style implies.Perhaps a more basic difference between the politicians and the president is that the former does not need to get approval at the ballot box at regular intervals. But there are qualifications even here. For a period in the 1960s, university presidents were subjected to regular trials as unpredictable as an election and as emotionally charged as a Chinese people's court. And, recently, with the widespread acceptance of a terminal presidency, the incumbent has the feeling that time, with its inescapable demands, is always at his back.

So far I have used the term "politicians" to describe those who work on a big public scale and for whom universities are a part, and only a minor part, of the complicated social terrain they must keep in mind. But the university is also a world of its own, in recent times like a small, self-contained state. And it has a political life of its own. Here the role of the president changes. He is now the principal politician, concerned with the interrelation of parts, frequently attempting to shape the whole in accordance with a general plan. In this context the academic spokesman tends to disappear into the politician; and academic literature on the president-politician is even gamier than it is on the common variety of public politician. Here is a passage where John Langton, elected Vice-chancellor of the struggling University of Toronto in 1855, a position that carried a salary and considerable authority, writes uninhibitedly about the Rev. John McCaul, who was then President of University College, the closest office to the Presidency of University.

> Dr. McCaul is no doubt a first rate scholar and a very clever man and he has one element fitting him for command that whether it is by bullying or by compromising or by artful countermining he never loses sight of the main object — to have his own way in the end; but he is absolutely deficient in the talent of order. Partly perhaps it is design. The end he always keeps in view, the means he is quite unscrupulous about and provided a thing will serve his turn in the end he cares not for its being suitable to the present state of affairs. No matter how heterogeneous or inconsistent with each other the materials may be, if he has or thinks he has the clue by which he can fit each of them into some place in his proposed building they will serve his turn. You may think I am prejudiced against the man because we have been brought into rivalry, but I formed my opinion of him very early in the day and those that know him best entertain the same. Whilst I was writing the previous page I had a visit from Dr. Wilson one of our Professors and, the conversation turning on McCaul, he warned me for the fiftieth time to beware of him and he added: "if he opposes you you may be safe enough by fighting it out, but if ever he entirely agrees with you and appears to go cordially with you, beware, he will trip you up if he can." I omitted one trait of McCaul's — when a man has such complicated plans on his hands he can rarely be certain what turn things may take and he very rarely commits himself so far to an opinion that he cannot withdraw from it, or does a thing so effectually that it cannot be undone. If he does not see

> clearly how it will work in, he had rather do nothing and wait the course of events.

At the heart of the internal political problem in the university is always the question of finance, and this in turn has always been closely related to an outside force of a restrictive and complicated nature. For most of the nineteenth century it was religious sectarianism. McCaul, and even more persistently and aggressively, his successor, Sir Daniel Wilson, sought by all the means in their power to preserve the University endowment against the claims of sectarian colleges. After the achievement of federation and the establishment of firm business control by the University of Toronto Act of 1906, a major internal responsibility of the President became the demonstration that the University was being run on sound business principles.

Thorstein Veblen's *The Higher Learning in America*, which was published in 1918, but meditated upon and partially written around the time of his great classic, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899), was, in large part, a picture of the businessman-president, and, given Veblen's gift for unbuttoned invective, an unflattering one. The president becomes an embodiment of the politician in his crudest and unloveliest form: a director who is yet servile to his financial masters; an indifferent scholar who protests his devotion to research and high academic standards. As the book moves forward the portrait of the businessman-president — Veblen calls him a Captain of Erudition — becomes increasingly darker and menacing. At first the tone is judicious, objective, with only an icy undercurrent of disapproval.

> He must be a strong man; that is to say, a capable man of affairs, tenacious and resourceful in turning the means at hand to account for this purpose, and easily content to let the end justify the means. He must be a man of scrupulous integrity, so far as may conduce to his success, but with a shrewd eye to the limits within which honesty is the best policy, for the purpose in hand. He must have full command of the means entrusted to him and full control of the force of employees and subordinates who are to work under his direction, and he must be able to rely on the instant and unwavering loyalty of his staff in any line of policy on which he may decide to enter. He must therefore have free power to appoint and dismiss, and to reward and punish, limited only by the formal ratification of his decisions by the board of directors who will be careful not to interfere or inquire unduly in these matters, — so long as their strong man shows results.

By the final chapter, the thin mask of objectivity has been removed. The qualifications for a university presidency are now rather similar to those for a ward boss (although, it should be noted, for a ward of affluence and respectability).

> Among the indispensable general qualifications, therefore, will be a "businesslike" facility in the management of affairs, an engaging address and fluent command of language before a popular audience, and what is called "optimism," — a serene and voluble loyalty to the current conventionalities and a conspicuously profound conviction that all things are working

> out for good, except for such untoward details as do not visibly conduce to the vested advantage of the well-to-do businessmen under the established law and order. To secure an appointment to executive office it is not only necessary to be possessed of these qualifications, and contrive to put them in evidence; the aspirant must ordinarily also, to use a colloquialism, be willing and able to "work his passage" by adroit negotiation and detail engagements on points of policy, appointments and administration.

Veblen reserves his sharpest invective for the businessman-president's oratorical accomplishments, which are employed to assure the outside world that the university is dedicated to morality and solvency.

> So that an executive who aspires to do his whole duty in these premises will become in some sort an itinerant dispensary of salutary verbiage; and university presidents have so come to be conventionally indispensable for the effusion of graceful speech at all gatherings of the well-to-do for convivial deliberation on the state of mankind at large.

A delightful footnote to this portrait of the businessman-president is given by an old student of Veblen — Stephen Leacock (1914). Dr. Boomer, the president of Plutoria University, in *Arcadian Adventures with the Idle Rich* is a comic version of Veblen's moral satire. Dr. Boomer combines a contempt for the staff with a respect for wealth, and devotes most of his time to attracting wealth to the University. He thus describes to a prospective donor some of the wealthy benefactors of the University, who have been commemorated in "bronze busts of men with Roman faces and bare necks, and the edge of a toga cast over each shoulder."

> "A splendid group of men, are they not?" said the president. "We owe them much. This is the late Mr. Hogworth, a man of singularly large heart." Here he pointed to a brooze figure wearing a wreath of laurel and inscribed *Gulielmus Hogworth, Litt. Doc.* "He had made a great fortune in the produce business, and wishing to mark his gratitude to the community, he erected the anemometer, the wind-measure, on the roof of the building, attaching to it no other condition than that his name should be printed in the weekly reports immediately beside the velocity of the wind. The figure beside him is the late Mr. Underbugg, who founded our lectures on the Four Gospels on the sole stipulation that henceforth any reference of ours to the four gospels should be coupled with his name."
>
> "What's that after his name?" asked Tomlinson.
>
> "Litt. Doc.?" said the president. "Doctor of Letters, our honorary degree. We are always happy to grant it to our benefactors by a vote of the faculty."

Leacock's Dr. Boomer may be a little reminiscent, particularly in his dramatic use of Latin tags, of Sir William Peterson, classicist and president of McGill University during the first part of Leacock's academic career. But the McGill associations would be apparent only to a few Canadian readers with inside knowledge. Leacock clearly had in mind, as did Veblen, the great, private institutions in the United States. In the United States there were vast capital accumulations and wealthy men prepared, under persuasion, to shift some of their capital to the universities. It is difficult to transfer the Veblen and Leacock indictment to Canada, particularly to Toronto, where the two presidents whose tenure of office spanned most of this century until the end of the second world war, Sir Robert Falconer and Dr. Henry Cody, revived the clerical tradition that had begun with Strachan and McCaul.

Veblen's attack on the businessman-president, the Captain of Erudition, was conducted from a high, austere position. He disapproved of the drift of the university towards magnitude by the steady accretion of professional faculties (a process that was to result in the multiversity of the nineteen sixties), and the consequent delight of university administrators in statistical analysis. In this he was perceptive and accurate. But he also disapproved of the very concept of the American university (which, in a modified form, was also the Canadian) as essentially an undergraduate arts college to which was then added professional schools on a parallel basis and, above them all, a graduate school. To him the proper university was the graduate school alone, a group of scholars pursuing "esoteric knowledge" out of a sense of 'idle curiosity' in the company of young scholars similarly motivated. Such a university didn't need a president, let alone a businessman-president with a talent for popular oratory, nor indeed any administrators at all. Veblen's concept was an academic utopia, a green and pleasant place for scholars, but not the sort of institution that would find welcome and support in a complex, expanding society. And the reality the diverse, many-purposed university that served both the short-term and long-term needs of society — did require central direction. It was just as well if the president had some of the business virtues that Veblen so deeply despised — a sensitivity to the probable outcome of a statistical pattern and a knowledge of where, at a given time, money could be most effectively spent. But beyond this, he should have interests and attitudes that carry him beyond institutional politics to the world of public politics, where the university is an integral part of any social design.

It has not been customary to include 'political sagacity' among the list of presidential 'virtues'. In a tribute to Sir Robert Falconer, Malcolm Wallace (1944) listed these virtues (with the implication that Sir Robert had all of them). They were "scholarship, character, good judgment, diplomatic skill, an instinct for justice, a capacity for dignified and effective conduct of public occasions" (Wallace, 1944, p. 149). It would never have occurred to him (or to any other academic commentator then or since) to have added skill as a politician. I would suggest, however, that political skill always has been a necessary quality for the university president. The unsavoury connotation of the word in an academic context derives from the fact that the president was, until recently, a hobbled politician, denied the chance to meet public politicians on their own ground, confined to the intense, tropical environment of the university.

My simple thesis is that the effective university president must be a politician free to deal with other politicians; that the conditions for full presidential political activity did not develop in Canadian universities until the early 1960s of this century; that, before that, both the position of the university and the role of the president ruled out free political activity, and turned the president into a minor, faintly exotic satrap. If involvement in politics stains the white radiance of the presidential image, that is a small matter. For it is essential that the president be free to work with politicians, who must be responsive to opinion therefore, susceptible to persuasion, and not be restricted to bureaucrats, who tend to create their own self-enclosed world and resist any changes in it. But political freedom for the Canadian president was long delayed because he was a person with little power working in an institution that had little power to bestow on him.

The earliest English-speaking Universities: Dalhousie, King's College, the University of New Brunswick, McGill, Queen's, and Toronto had, in the opinion of their founders, a very specific place in the social scheme. Robin Harris (1976) in his recent and authoritative, *A History of Higher Education in Canada 1663–1960*, cites two passages that set the tone of the earliest ventures in higher education. The first is an address to Sir Guy Carleton, Governor-in-Chief of British North America, sent to him in 1783 by five clergymen still resident in New York.

> The founding of a College or Seminary of learning on a liberal plan in that province where youth may receive a virtuous education and can be qualified for the learned professions, is, we humbly conceive, a measure of the greatest consequence, as it would diffuse religious literature, loyalty and good morals among His Majesty's subjects there. If such a seminary is not established the inhabitants will have no means of educating their sons at home, but will be under the necessity of sending them, for that purpose either to Great Britain or Ireland, which will be attended with an expense that few can bear, or else to some of the states unfavourable to the British tradition.

The second letter, four years later, is from Bishop Mountain, who was to be a founder of McGill, to the lieutenant-governor of Quebec.

> Let me be permitted, then, to suggest the danger which may result to the political principles and to the future character as subjects of such of our young men among the higher ranks as the exigency of the case obliges their parents to send for classical education to the colleges of the United States. In these Seminaries, most assuredly, they are not likely to imbibe that attachment to our constitution in Church and State, that veneration for the Government of their country, and that loyalty to their King, to which it is so particularly necessary in the present time to give all the advantages of early predilection in order to fix them deeply both in the understanding and the heart.

The universities, in short, were conceived of as important political weapons. They stood in the front line of the counter-revolutionary attack. They were to preserve class divisions, constitutional monarchy, and sound moral principles against the threat of American revolutionary subversion. They were the creations — not so much of the state, particularly in Upper Canada had only a shadowy existence — as of a small privileged group who embodied authority in the colony — the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the Church of England and the officials — chiefly officers in the British forces, minor aristocrats, and bureaucrats versed in the ritual of the law. An austere classical curriculum followed inevitably from the concept of the social function of the university. Modifications in the direction of a less exclusive university, with expanded and more flexible curriculum, came rapidly enough, from the evangelical pragmatism of an Egerton Ryerson, and the faith in the redemptive power of education was experienced by Scotsmen like Thomas McCulloch of Pictou Academy and Dalhousie University, and his disciples, William Dawson of McGill and George Grant of Queen's. But the original idea of the university did not easily disappear from men's minds. Thomas Chandler Haliburton, writing at the middle of the century, commented on the public distrust in Canada of the universities.

> In Canada, there is an unfriendly feeling toward these institutions, which people who play upon popular prejudice or ignorance, endeavor to foster, by representing them as engrossed by the sons of the rich, who are able to pay the expense of their own instruction, without assistance from the public treasury; and that all that is thus bestowed, is so much withdrawn from the more deserving but untrained children of the poor.

As the basis of government became more popular, the universities, at the outset bastions of the state, retreated into a genteel obscurity, except when sectarian passions were aroused over the division of the endowment. The British North America Act of 1867 assigned education to the provinces. The fathers of confederation had primary and secondary school in mind, since the universities, although numerous for a nascent nation (there were 18 degree-granting institutions in 1868), seemed to belong to a private world of religious sectarianism and individual philanthropy. The provinces now became the official guardians, but they looked upon the universities as being outside the official state family.

A financial history of the University of Toronto down to the end of the second world war would make dismal reading, and there is no reason to think that the history of other Canadian universities would be brighter. The Federation Act of 1887 may have been a political and educational triumph, but it did not revitalize financial policy. The provincial government continued to deny the right of the university to share in the consolidated revenue of the province; the cynical assumption was that the university had been endowed by the crown, "and that this should, apparently, suffice it for all time to come" (Stewart, 1927, p. 159). In 1901 the government relented in a small way under the pressure of the newly organized alumni association, and made some minor concessions. The financial recommendations of the 1906 Commission (which were accepted by the government) ushered in a brief period of security. The principal recommendation was that the University should receive on an annual basis a sum equal to 50% of the average receipts from succession duties over a period of three years — a principle that gave immediate solvency and an assurance of increasing revenue as the province grew and the university grew with it. But the new policy was abruptly abandoned by the government in 1914, and a limit of $500,000 placed on the University's share in succession duties. A commission appointed in 1920 to make recommendations about finance reaffirmed the 1906 recommendation, but the government did not accept it. It was, of course, forced to make ad hoc grants above the $500,000 to enable the university to survive. But "over the ensuing 20 years the amount of the annual grant averaged $1,500,000, approximately one-third the amount that would have been allocated had the succession duty formula been followed." (Harris, 1976, p. 362.) Government policy was no doubt shaped by the growth of Queen's and Western, their consequent claims on government support, and the fear that a generous treatment of Toronto would encourage lively expectations elsewhere. The result was a long period of financing that was both inadequate and quixotic, in which the accidents of personal association and political sympathy played a large part. It is a miracle that the University of Toronto established itself during the 1920s and 1930s as an important centre of scholarship comparable with the best American state universities, some of which received government grants twice as great.

The inadequacy of financial support up until the end of the second world war was, in some measure, a reflection of the comparative obscurity of the universities in the broad political picture. The universities were thought of as elite institutions, graceful adornments of polite society, necessary adjuncts to law, religion, and education. There was no movement in nineteenth century Canada to link the universities with social need, such as there was in the United States following the passing of the Morrill Act in 1862, which provided land grant endowments for state universities with a bias towards agriculture and the mechanic arts. The initial move towards advanced work in agriculture and engineering came from professional societies. The universities were content to concentrate on undergraduate instruction in arts (which had many advantages, most notably the eventual development of a strong system of honour courses) and both graduate studies and research were neglected until well into the twentieth century. The universities thus had little basis for an appeal to society: a limited enrolment which never rose until the second world war to more than 4% of the college age group; a belated recognition of the need for professional education in engineering, agriculture, and medicine; and a weak tradition in scholarship and research.

If the university carried little weight with the politicians, its official spokesman, the president, carried even less. To begin with, the office of the President of the University of Toronto did not really exist until 1892 and was not clearly defined until 1906. Strachan was president of King's College, McCaul of University College (except for the period from 1850-53 when he was designated president of a shadowy university). Wilson was also President of University College, but the term 'president' referred only to his chairmanship of the University Council created after the Federation Act of 1887. London finally emerged as president of the University in 1892, but he had little authority. The report of the 1906 Royal Commission sums up with the hopeless position of the president the measureal restraint of secretarial prose:

> At present when appointments are made by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, when the purse is controlled by the Board of Trustees, when the

> Senate, with the Vice-Chancellor as Chairman, directs academic policy, and the President is also one of the teaching staff, the Presidency is not made an office of sufficient importance in the University.

The major achievement of the University of Toronto Act of 1906, which turned the recommendations of the report into legislation, was to bring together academic responsibility in the office of the president, in particular, to give him the sole power to recommend academic appointments. Although such recommendations could be turned down by the newly created Board, the Board never to my knowledge exercised this authority. On the other hand, the Board was given complete control over the finances of the University. All the detailed financial decisions, it is true continued to be made by academics. The financial power of the Board operated in two broad areas: decisions about physical expansion; and the arrangements with the provincial government for the annual grant. Both of these were crucial, particularly the latter.

The system of divided authority, of two adjoining kingdoms each with its acknowledged sovereign, was most carefully articulated under the chairmanship of Eric Phillips, who was chairman from 1945 to 1964. He instituted the position of Comptroller (later to develop into a Vice-President), the senior financial officer who reported directly to the Chairman. Phillips had been appointed by George Drew, the Prime-Minister of Ontario, and he interpreted his role as that of the head of a Crown Corporation, enjoying a good deal of autonomy, but ultimately responsible to the government for efficient and economical management. He reserved the sole right to discuss high financial matters with the Prime Minister (who, at this time, seemed to be the only minister actively concerned with the universities); and given his close association with Mr. Drew, this was a happy arrangement for the University of Toronto. When I entered the President's office in 1948 as assistant to Sidney Smith, the Phillips system was firmly established and was working smoothly. It was based on an entente between the Chairman and President, not, it seemed too difficult to maintain, since Eric Phillips had wide intellectual interests, was deeply committed to the University, and was sympathetic to Sidney Smith's academic goals. (And devotion to the University and sympathy with the presidential academic policy characterized the attitude of Phillips' successors on the old Board — Henry Borden and O.D. Vaughan.) It was understood that the Chairman would be the sole political emissary and that the President would not venture beyond his academic kingdom. Eric Phillips had a natural talent for irony, which ranged from the relaxed and benign to the sharp and sardonic. He liked to talk about the heavy burden he carried in dealing with Queen's Park politicians, who were, he implied, wily and materialistic fellows, who could be understood and dealt with only by a businessman. The president was, thereby, insulated from this dark world of intrigue, free to speculate and plan in a high-minded, academic manner.

Although the 1906 Act gave the President great powers, and prepared the way for a new age of tranquillity and accomplishment under Falconer, Cody, and Smith, it removed him completely from the political arena. He was, indeed, less a political figure than he was in the nineteenth century when, although constantly frustrated by checks and counter-powers, he could, in an emergency, go directly to the political centre, pound on the table, and demand justice for the university.

In one area the president did enjoy a high degree of political freedom — in the national scene. A national organization for Canadian universities had been established in 1916, and Sir Robert Falconer had been one of its founders. It was a remarkable body in that it brought together all the Canadian universities, large and small, sectarian and secular, English and French. Although it was essentially a deliberative body — and for many years preferred to be known as a 'conference' — it did form a common front on federal financial measures that promised some additional help to the universities. When in 1951, as the result of recommendations of the Royal Commission on the National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences, the federal government began a system of supplementary per capita grants to the universities, the Conference changed its name to Association and became, on a high plane, of course, a lobbying and pressure group. The 'fifties and the early 'sixties were the period of the national conference designed to reveal both the plight and the centrality of the universities, and of deputations to see the Prime-Ministers — Mr. St. Laurent, Mr. Diefenbaker, and Mr. Pearson — and their ministers of finance. It is well to remember, in these days of communitarian and provincial zeal, that it was the federal government that took the initiative in recognizing the need for a comprehensive approach to the problems of higher education, and that it was a federal prime-minister from French Canada, Louis St. Laurent, who set before the country the high humanistic goal of the university.

The presidential involvement in federal politics (and both Sidney Smith and I gave a large proportion of our time to these matters) was not looked upon as a violation of the understanding between Chairman and President that grew out of the 1906 Act. The real battle ground was still Queen's Park, not Ottawa, and at Queen's Park, for Toronto, the Chairman was in command. But events were forcing a change. The Province had been doing its own study of the financing of higher education and was startled by the figures that emerged; at the same time, almost every population centre in the province was doing a study of its needs in higher education, and was convinced that a college or university (the distinction was rarely made) should be forthwith set up in its principal town, where a beautiful site was available and a committee of senior citizens was eager to start a financial campaign. The deeper involvement of the province in higher education inevitably brought about a change in the political atmosphere. There was, first of all, the sudden elevation of higher education to a position of public visibility; it became, in short, one of the priorities in political action. But the province had no facilities for planning the great expansion that was clearly imminent. It needed the knowledge, and techniques that had been developed in the universities, and, to its great credit, it turned to the universities for support and direction. This, in turn, meant a sudden elevation in the position of the President. He, not the Chairman, was the key to the knowledge and techniques. No Chairman could possibly have the time to explore these complicated problems, and besides, his horizon was bounded by the individual institution.

Before the presidents could function effectively on this new political front, they had to resolve some vexatious problems. Presidents had worked together easily on the national scene, but, in that area, there was the softening fact of distance and unfamiliarity. But in the provinces — this was certainly true of Ontario with the largest number of universities, shortly to be greatly expanded — no tradition of cooperation and consultation existed. Presidents walked serenely and carried a deep suspicion of each other. Add to this the clash between the old and the new, the haves and the have-nots (shortly to turn into the solid state and the exploding) and presidents, now breathing a heady atmosphere of global decision-making, were reluctant to share it. There was a sudden revival of the old monarchical presidency: the presidents were the only legitimate spokesmen of official university bodies, and their authority could not be divided. But gradually a provincial Council was formed, in which academic representatives joined presidents, and tough decisions were made often against the interests of individual institutions.

The Council was successful in persuading the government to adopt measures that would reduce the possibility of arbitrary government action. It won acknowledgment of the concept of the buffer committee, upon which the British grants committee was based, a non-government body with substantial academic representation. It also convinced the government that the administration of universities should not be merged with the administration of primary and secondary schools and that a separate ministry should be established. These were important concessions, although there were recurrent doubts about their effectiveness. Did the buffer committee have a genuine independence or was it a means of giving government action a specious appearance of large-minded democratic cooperation? Was the Ministry of Colleges and Universities sufficiently important to command attention in the cabinet? Originally it was occupied by William Davis, who retained his post of Minister of Education, and given his sympathetic understanding of the universities and his imminent elevation to the premiership, this was all to the good. But subsequent appointments moved in and out of the ministry with unbecoming speed with just enough time at their disposal to master the prejudices of their predecessors.

Still, on balance, the presidents and their academic associates had reason to be happy about what they accomplished on the provincial plane. This was my impression in 1971 when I left office, and the subsequent history of the Council strengthens it. When Dr. Macdonald, the executive director, retired recently, he set down what he believed to be the achievements of the council.

> (1) [The universities] have accommodated to more rigorous constraint than other groups in the public sector through their own ingenuity, and with more fair-minded recognition of the economic realities facing the provinces than other groups.
>
> (2) The universities have cooperated effectively in major areas where cooperation is advantageous, e.g., the Ontario University Application Centre which I believe to be the best, the most efficient and the most economical operation of its kind in the world; the automated network of library

> services which is the most sophisticated on this continent and probably in the world; the universities have at great cost in money, time, effort, and pride exposed their graduate programs to the rigours of external evaluation by world scholars.

At the same time that the president was released to play a political role outside his own.institution, he found that within he was still rigidly confined in his actions. The 1906 Report made crystal clear where his responsibilities lay. "We believe," said the Report, "that the Governors, as representing the Crown, should select the President. As their appointment for short terms insures their acceptability to the public, [in practice, these 'short terms' were automatically renewed] so he, owing his appointment to them, must work in harmony with them, and be amenable in all respects to their supervision. The test of his success as an administrator will be his ability to secure the co-operation of the Governors since, lacking their ratification of his acts, all his efforts must be futile." In short, the president appointed by the governors was responsible exclusively to them. Of course, it was to his advantage to maintain good relations with the Senate, which was the official voice of the faculty, and his political task, insofar as politics is the art of accommodating powerful and potentially antagonistic groups, was to avoid clashes between Senate and Board. But in the post-second world war university, this was a limited task that was becoming increasingly unreal. Other powers were rising outside of Board and Senate that threatened their eclipse. The faculty associations now realized that the crucial decisions affecting the university were being made on provincial level, and they sought and gained influence there. They also realized that the Board could not cope adequately with the intricate priorities of expansion, and with the increasing complexities of faculty appointments, promotions, and tenure; they sought representation on the Board, not unfortunately granted, but given indirect recognition through this membership on an intermediary advisory body known as the President's Council. The faculty salary committee was strengthened and pressed its case with great vigour. (The administration welcomed this although it was unhappy about serious suggestions that, in the event of disagreement, an outside arbitrator should be brought in. It seemed to me that the autonomy of the university depended upon its success in resolving ultimate budget problems by its own governing body.) The official student association was even more clamorous; its specific aims in university government were often lost in the energy of protest and in the espousal persistent and more seasoned than the faculty, and they clung tenaciously to one idea that finally triumphed — openness in university government.

In this atmosphere it was evident that the Board established by the Act of 1906 could no longer command authority in the University and that the president could no longer see his role as being "amenable in all respects to their supervisions." It seemed to me that both the president and the final governing body should find a new centre; a university without cohesiveness and without the recognition of a source of authority would rapidly lose its autonomy. I thought it was also evident that central authority should be representative of the whole university, and that the president should be its choice and its principal spokesman. After two years of discussion, in a commission, in bodies throughout the

University, and in a university-wide committee, which was a sort of constitutional assembly, the university miraculously agreed on the composition of a central university body. Unfortunately later modifications by government edict disturbed the hard-won compromises, and made implementation difficult. But the three days in June 1970 in which the nature and composition of the new governing body were hammered out in intense, responsible, and good humoured debate, by a body of 160 people representative of the whole university, showed the university at its triumphant best; this seemed to me to demonstrate that the university was the place where wide participation in government was both desirable and possible.

The formation of a representative body of final and undisputed power has released the president to seek his authority in the whole university, not in one part of it. The political freedom outside is now balanced by political freedom inside. But the role is not thereby made easier. The president is released only to face new problems perhaps more grievous than those that rocked the turbulent sixties, large among them, provincial policies of financial constraint, and a certain public cynicism about universities. He must still rely upon the same resources, a unified university, not easy to achieve, and a sympathetic public, always elusive. And, as always, the president must maintain the tension — a healthy tension — between the University and Government, between those who put intellectual goals first and those who make economic security the end of their endeavours. In his insistence that the good society will always give high priority to those intellectual goals, the president finds that his responsibilities as politician and his responsibilities as academic are one and indivisible.

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Governments and Universities

BENJAMIN LEVIN[*] & NANCY SULLIVAN[†]

> . . . we must find new sources of funding for education. If we were to face a war we would certainly find the money. The challenge we now face in revitalizing and revamping our education system is, if less dramatic, even more important to the future of Canada than any of the wars we have fought. (Strong, 1987)

Provincial governments in Canada are estimated to have paid out some $7.7 billion in grants to universities in 1987–1988 (Statistics Canada, 1987), and this figure does not include all provincial payments for student aid, research, and special programs of various kinds or direct federal support of various forms. That this level of funding can be talked about as a crisis, or commonly referred to as "chronic underfunding," says something about the nature of governments and university relationships in Canada today. The two parties peer balefully at each other across a wide and apparently widening gulf.

The recent National Forum on Postsecondary Education vividly illustrated the gap. Delegates from outside the postsecondary community talked of the many needs not currently being met by postsecondary institutions, and the need for those institutions to be more responsive than they are presently perceived as being. Delegates from postsecondary institutions on the other hand, who constituted a plurality (30%) of the participants, talked repeatedly about the problem of lack of resources to meet these challenges.

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Note: The opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors in their private capacity, and do not necessarily represent the policy or opinion of the government of Manitoba, the Department of Education, or the Universities Grants Commission.

For the universities, the issue seems obvious. University education is of fundamental importance to the country. It drives economic development and underpins social development. "The University of Manitoba is the Province's single most valuable human resource for economic growth," said a recent document produced by The University of Manitoba. "As the University's budget is ever-increasingly constrained, its role as the Province's major engine of economic growth will be weakened. The more the University is weakened, the more the economy will suffer" (University of Manitoba, 1987). Universities ought, it is argued, to have at least a steady share of such indicators as GNP or total government spending.

Moreover, providing access to universities for all who are qualified or wish to attend is seen as a fundamental tenet of a just society (if one dares to use that phrase in the 1980s), but providing places for the burgeoning population of adults wishing to enrol in universities, as well as the cohorts of sequential students, is an expensive business.

In making these arguments, universities have adopted with great skill the rhetoric of world competition. In the cutthroat international market, it is argued, which is so often coupled verbally with an emerging world of "hi tech," the development of knowledge will be more important than ever. The Strong quote above illustrates this argument at its most skillful.

The universities marry these arguments about their importance in the future with appeals to the past as well. They speak of the need to preserve and pass on the heritage of civilization. They emphasize the critical need for individual faculty members to be free to follow their interests, and they argue eloquently for the importance of providing each university not only with more dollars, but also with the maximum possible autonomy as to how to spend them.

From the standpoint of governments, the picture looks very different. Not only do some of the claims of universities appear somewhat exaggerated, but.there are important additional considerations about which the universities are seen to be silent.

The first problem is, of course, the many pressures on the public purse, exacerbated quite often by the slow increase in government revenues from existing taxation sources. Sectors like education, with a large share of total spending, believe strongly that they need even more. Newer sectors with modest shares argue that their late emergence on the scene at a time of restraint should not deprive them of the resources needed to accomplish their important work. Naturally, there is no agreement among claimants as to whose needs will prevail. A colleague recently reported a conversation which occurred among the board of directors of a major hospital, arguing that education budgets should be cut to provide more money for health care! One wonders how many sectors have used Maurice Strong's analogy of war to support spending in their area — environmental groups? health care institutions? day care and child welfare? medical research? cultural organizations? municipal governments?

Governments are required, however reluctantly, to make allocation decisions among sectors. If they allocate less to postsecondary education than to health or social services, it is because that is their sense of priorities.

The postsecondary community has argued that these priorities are misplaced, that postsecondary education is fundamental to other development and so must be at the top of the list. This argument has not been totally persuasive to governments either in Canada, or by current data (Taylor, 1987), in other developed countries either.

There are several reasons for the lack of effect of the position advanced by postsecondary lobbies. The least important of these, in our view, is the way in which the case is put forward. Postsecondary representatives frequently say that they believe they would have more impact on governments if they "did a better job of telling their story" (Pierre, 1987). Our belief is that this is not true. The lobbies on behalf of postsecondary education are well organized and do communicate effectively. Moreover, because almost all politicians and senior officials have postsecondary education, a basic familiarity with the sector already exists. Such is not the case in other sectors such as energy, or natural resources, or environment, where most decision-makers will be, at first, quite ignorant of the field.

A more important concern to governments is the sense that expenditures in social services, such as education, can rise dramatically while at the same time, public satisfaction with the services declines in what Wildavsky (1979) called, speaking of health care, "doing better and feeling worse." To take an example, per pupil spending in Canada's public schools doubled in real terms, between the early 1970s and the early 1980s, while public support for and confidence in the schools declined. Health care expenditures rose dramatically, but there probably have never been so many complaints about access to health services. Postsecondary expenditures rose rapidly just before a period of high inflation, growing unemployment, and slow economic growth. These comments are made not to deny all link between spending and outcomes, but to point out the contingent nature with that link. At one time education was sold as the solution to social and economic problems. Post-secondary education still claims such positive impacts. Yet experience does not always support these claims. It is hard to think of an area of social service in which increased expenditure has, in fact, yielded all or most of the promised benefits. Is it, then, any surprise that governments do not altogether believe that still more dollars will lead to the promised land?

A further set of difficulties arises from the sense of many outside the postsecondary education community that postsecondary institutions are slow to change and unresponsive. The comment could, of course, be made about many, if not all, large institutions, but it carries a greater sting because postsecondary education advocates invoke dramatic societal change as grounds for the importance of postsecondary education, while seemingly, at the same time, resisting re-examination of their own practices and attitudes.

It might be worthwhile mentioning a few aspects of postsecondary activity which seem particularly troublesome in this regard.

- The great difficulties students often encounter in having their prior education recognized at a new institution. (This leaves aside entirely the question of credit for skills and knowledge gained outside formal education.) This is a serious problem for Canadian students transferring, as well as for immigrants to Canada. Indeed, faculties or programs may even balk at recognizing courses offered elsewhere within the same province or even, on occasion, within the same institution.
- The insistence that quality is to be ensured by admission practices rather than by the outcomes of teaching and support services. Postsecondary institutions have not been willing, generally, to explore what could be done to allow those without the usual preparation to enter and succeed through improved pedagogy and better support services, despite evidence (Unruh, 1986) that much could be accomplished if the will were there. The insistence on admission standards suggested to one observer a parallel to hospitals insisting that they would admit only the healthy, since the sick required too much care, and might not get better in any case.
- The slowness in adjusting to changes in the demographics of both actual and potential students. Even now not all programs are available part-time, while off-campus programs are still relatively infrequent. The specific needs of minorities, adults in the labour force, women re-entering the workforce, and other groups have been dealt with primarily through "special" programs, while the mainstream instructional and ongoing practices have hardly changed.

One could go on, but the point is not to denigrate postsecondary institutions. Rather, these are examples of the kinds of practices and attitudes which do more harm to the cause of postsecondary education than can ever be repaired by better public relations campaigns.

Nor are these comments meant to suggest that governments are on the side of the angels in their disputes with universities. Governments are, as all of us know, highly fallible, They operate under enormous pressure and usually with very limited time and information. Their nature requires that decisions be made, sometimes on highly complex and vitally important issues, in very short amounts of time. There is rarely an opportunity to give the issues the kind of careful and dispassionate analysis they may warrant. Governments are often caught trying to reconcile the irreconcilable, and to bring together contradictory points of view, or, at the least, to do things so as to offend as few people as possible (Levin, 1986). While some universities may sneer at this uncourageous approach to public policy, we do well to remember that it is a product of an open, democratic, and pluralist society. Just as we ask governments to understand certain aspects of the operations of universities as being "in the nature of things," so we must equally see the same truth in some of the less attractive features of governments.

These comments bring us squarely to the issue of the autonomy of universities. Canadian governments have been highly respectful of academic freedom for university faculty. The idea that faculty members must be free to study and teach according to their conscience is not in question.

There is, however, a considerable leap from this belief to the matter of the autonomy of universities as institutions very largely dependent on the public purse. As Harry Arthurs, President of York University, put it:

> Arguments about the legitimacy of government intervention are often no more than disagreements about the wisdom or fairness of government policy ... government intervention is inevitable once we accept the basic premise of government funding. (Arthurs, 1987, pp. 12, 14).

This does not mean that governments believe they should run universities, or dictate to them. In fact, governments in Canada have been very reluctant to impose directions on universities, partly because of their respect for tradition or autonomy, and partly from a belief that decision-making at the local level can be a very powerful benefit. The trend does appear to be in the direction of more government influence, primarily through targeted funding or regulation for particular purposes, although the vast bulk of support to Canadian universities continues to be in the form of unconditional block grants. An appeal to autonomy as a virtue in itself will not likely be effective, especially when autonomy may be seen as a cloak for a lack of willingness to reconsider policies and practices. Unless autonomy can be shown to produce valuable results (and we recognize the considerable ambiguity raised by that term), it will have less and less impact in the field of government/university relations. There are not likely to be major departures in university governance imposed by Canadian governments, but continued programmatic and financial pressure on universities seems a certainty.

All these tensions and difficulties do not mitigate a central fact: governments and universities are inextricably bound to each other. Universities have become central institutions for certain kinds of purposes, and these purposes are of great social importance. They are so important that they demand strong support, not only financially, but legally, and programmatically. (Often omitted in discussions of government/university relations is the importance of the legislative mandate given to universities to grant degrees and train professionals. See Skolnik, 1987.)

The question to be asked, then, is how governments and universities can live and work together more productively; how the tensions which must inevitably exist between them can be as productive as possible. While there are no perfect solutions, some general direction can be suggested as a conclusion.

A first proposal would be for each party to rethink its stance or approach in relation to the other. Both general strategies and tactics need to be reconsidered in the light of current conditions, with a view not only to making one's case, but also to promoting a real understanding by each party of the reality of the other. One suspects that the attitudes of both sides, formulated for one set of circumstances — or perhaps the result of accretion rather than any kind of reasoned formulation — may not be the most suitable to today.

Secondly, since resources will continue to be limited, there will be increasing need to focus discussion on real issues, and to take every opportunity for successful collaboration rather than confrontation or attack. Of course, universities need to defend their essential values, and governments can be relied on to do the same. But mutual criticism, or even incessant complaint, cannot help either cause. Rather, greater use of negotiations, more joint venturing, and an effort to focus on what can be done instead of what cannot (Morrison, 1986) would be helpful.

The vehicles for this changed process are not presently in place. They will have to be invented, or developed based on those systems and organizations available. Such a change will require creativity, boldness, and goodwill. It will not be easy, but it is essential.

Gouvernements et Universités

BENJAMIN LEVIN* & NANCY SULLIVAN†

> . . . nous devons trouver de nouvelles sources de financement pour l'enseignement. Si nous faisions face à une guerre, nous trouverions certainement l'argent; le défi qui se pose à nous aujourd'hui et qui consiste à revitaliser et à reorganiser notre système d'enseignement, est certes moins dramatique, mais encore plus important pour l'avenir du Canada que toutes les guerres auxquelles nous avons participé. (Strong, 1987).

On estime qu'au Canada les gouvernements provinciaux ont accordé quelque 7,7 millions de dollars de subventions aux universités en 1987–1988 (Statistique Canada, 1987), et ce chiffre ne comprend pas tout ce que les provinces payent d'aide aux étudiants, de recherche et de programmes spéciaux de toutes catégories, ni les diverses formes de financement accordées directement par le gouvernement fédéral. Que l'on puisse parler dans ces circonstances d'une situation de "crise," ou dire communément que l'on souffre "en permanence de financement insuffisant" montrent bien ce qui caractérise les relations qui existent actuellement entre les gouvernements et les universités. Les deux parties s'observent avec défiance et restent sur leurs positions de part et d'autre d'un gouffre profond qui semble se creuser sans cesse davantage.

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Remarque: Les idées exprimées dans cet article sont les idées personnelles des auteurs et ne représente pas nécessairement le point du vue ou les objectifs du gouvernement du Manitoba, du ministère de l'Éducation ou de la Commission des subventions aux universités.

Le Colloque national sur l'enseignement postsecondaire qui s'est tenu il y a peu de temps a montré ceci de façon très nette. Les délégués qui ne faisaient pas partie du secteur universitaire ont présenté les nombreuses exigences auxquelles les institutions postsecondaires étaient actuellement incapables de répondre et ont demandé ces établissements d'en tenir compte davantage à l'avenir qu'à l'heure actuelle. D'autre part, les délégués des établissements postsecondaires qui représentaient la majorité relative des participants (30%) ont dit à plusieurs reprises que c'était le manque de ressources financières qui les empêchait de répondre à ces exigences.

Du point de vue des universités, la question paraît évidente. L'enseignement universitaire est d'importance primordiale pour le pays. C'est un des leviers de l'expansion économique et la clef de voûte du progrès social. "L'Université du Manitoba est le seul outil, et par conséquent le plus précieux, que possède la province pour produire les ressources humaines capables de contribuer à la croissance économique," disait récemment un document publié par l'université du Manitoba. "Plus le budget de l'université diminue, plus le rôle de cet outil essentiel au développement économique de la province s'affaiblit. Plus on affaiblit l'université, plus l'économie risque de souffrir." (Université du Manitoba, 1987). Les universités, nous dit-on, devraient au moins bénéficier d'un pourcentage stable soit du PNB du pays, soit du montant total des dépenses du gouvernement.

De plus, permettre à tous ceux qui en sont capables, ou qui le désirent, de suivre des cours dans des universités, est considéré comme un des principes fondamentaux d'une société juste (si toutefois l'on ose employer une expression de cette nature à notre époque); cependant, l'accueil de tous les adultes pleins d'espoir qui souhaitent s'inscrire à l'université, ainsi que du grand nombre d'étudiants en cours d'études est une entreprise qui coûte cher.

Les universités, lorsqu'elles ont recours à de tels arguments, montrent qu'elles ont adopt de façon très habile la rhétorique issue de la rivalité internationale. Dans le contexte de la concurrence acharnée que se livrent les divers pays sur le marché international, dit-on, et qui se double souvent de mots nés du monde nouveau des "experts de la technologie," l'approfondissement des connaissances deviendra plus important que jamais. La citation de Strong présentée plus haut est une illustration des plus habiles de ce raisonnement.

En plus d'insister sur l'importance qu'elles auront à l'avenir les universités ont aussi recours au passé. Elles parlent de la nécessité que nous avons de préserver et de transmettre les traditions de notre civilisation. Elles insistent sur le besoin impérieux de laisser les professeurs d'université libres d'étudier ce qui les intéresse, et elles présentent avec éloquence tous les arguments qui font ressortir combien il est important non seulement de donner plus d'argent aux universités mais aussi de leur donner le maximum de liberté possible quant à la façon de dépenser cet argent.

Du point de vue des gouvernements, la situation semble bien différente. Non seulement les réclamations des universités paraissent sans garanties, mais il y a en outre d'autres aspects importants à considérer, aspects dont les universités ne parlent pas.

Le premier problème, bien sûr, vient de toutes les pressions que l'on fait sur ceux qui tiennent les cordons de la bourse des deniers publics, pressions d'autant plus fortes que les revenus du gouvernement provenant des taxes et impôts actuels augmentent lentement. Des secteurs tels que l'éducation, bien que bénéficiant déjà d'une grande part des dépenses gouvernementales, croient fermement qu'ils ont besoin d'encore plus d'argent. Les secteurs plus récents dont la part est plus modeste disent que le fait qu'ils soient nés plus tard et en période de restrictions budgétaires ne devrait pas les priver des ressources dont ils ont besoin pour accomplir un travail aussi important que le leur. Bien sûr, ceux qui adressent leurs réclamations au gouvernement ne discutent pas entre eux afin de savoir lesquels ont les besoins les plus pressants. Un de mes collègues me répètait récemment une conversation qui avait eu lieu au conseil d'administration d'un grand hôpital: on y disait qu'il faudrait couper les dépenses de l'éducation afin de donner plus d'argent aux organismes de santé! Je me demande par ailleurs combien de secteurs se sont servis de l'analogie avec la guerre que fait Maurice Strong pour faire valoir combien les dépenses de leur domaine sont essentielles — les organismes de protection de la nature? les établissements de santé? les garderies et les services de protection des enfants? la recherche médicale? les organismes culturels? les municipalités?

C'est le rôle des gouvernements, quoi qu'il leur en coûte, de répartir les fonds entre les divers secteurs. S'ils accordent moins à l'enseignement supérieur qu'aux services sociaux ou aux services de santé, c'est que cela correspond à leur ordre de priorités.

La communauté universitaire s'est élevée contre ces choix qui sont, selon elle, mal faits; en effet, si l'enseignement postsecondaire est essentiel au progrès dans les autres domaines, il doit être le premier de la liste. Ce raisonnement n'a toutefois pas réussi à convaincre les gouvernements, que ce soit au Canada, ou dans les autres pays industrialisés, si l'on en juge par les données les plus récentes que nous ayons à ce sujet (Taylor, 1987).

Les raisons pour lesquelles le point de vue avancé par les groupes de pression des établissements postsecondaires n'a pas beaucoup d'effet sont diverses. La moins importante est, selon nous, la façon dont la situation nous est présentée. Les représentants des milieux universitaires disent souvent qu'ils jouiraient d'une plus grande influence sur les gouvernements s'ils "s'occupaient davantage de la manière dont ils expliquent la situation" (voir par exemple G. Pierre en 1987). Nous pensons que ceci est inexact. Les groupes de pression qui agissent au bénéfice de l'enseignement supérieur sont bien organisés et ils savent transmettre leur point de vue avec efficacité. De plus, presque tous les politiciens et les hauts fonctionnaires ont reçu une éducation supérieure, si bien qu'il y a dans ce milieu une bonne connaissance des universités, ce qui n'est pas toujours le cas dans les autres secteurs tels que l'énergie, les ressources naturelles ou l'environnement;

bien souvent, ceux qui doivent prendre des décisions relatives à ces domaines n'en ont, pour commencer, qu'une faible connaissance.

Ce qui préoccupe davantage les gouvernements, c'est le sentiment que lorsqu'ils dépensent de l'argent pour renforcer les services sociaux tels que l'éducation, il arrive souvent qu'une augmentation des dépenses s'accompagne d'une baisse de l'appréciation du public vis-à-vis de ce service: c'est ce qu'a voulu dire Wildovsky en 1979 lorsqu'il a parlé, à propos des services de santé, des améliorations grâce auxquelles la situation empire.” Prenons un exemple: entre le début des annes 70 et le début des annes 80, les dépenses nettes par élève des écoles publiques du Canada ont doublé, et dans le même temps, la confiance du public et son soutien vis-à-vis des coles ont diminué. Les dépenses dans le domaine de la santé ont considérablement augmenté, et pourtant il n'y a sûrement jamais eu autant de plaintes qu'il y en a actuellement relativement à l'accès aux services de santé. Quand les dépenses pour l'enseignement postsecondaire ont rapidement augmenté, cette augmentation a été suivie d'une période de forte inflation, d'accroissement du chômage et de faible croissance économique. Ces exemples n'ont pas pour but de dire qu'il n'y a aucun lien entre ce qu'on sème et ce qu'on récolte, mais ils montrent bien combien ce lien est souvent fortuit. À une certaine époque, on soutenait que ce serait grâce l'enseignement que l'on parviendrait à surmonter les problèmes économiques et sociaux. Les milieux universitaires soutiennent toujours ce point de vue. Pourtant, la réalité est tout autre. En fait on peut difficilement trouver un seul service public dans lequel l'augmentation des dépenses a effectivement produit les amliorations que l'on attendait d'elle. Faut-il donc s'étonner de constater que les gouvernements ne croient pas vraiment qu'une nouvelle augmentation de nos ressources nous permette d'atteindre notre but?

Mais il y a aussi d'autres difficultés, dues cette fois à l'idée que partage un grand nombre d'observateurs ne faisant pas partie du milieu universitaire; cette idée, c'est que les établissements postsecondaires n'évoluent pas facilement et sont lents à répondre à de nouvelles exigences. On pourrait bien sûr dire la même chose d'un grand nombre d'organismes de grande taille, et même peut-être de tous; toutefois, cette remarque a ici plus de mordant du fait que les porte-parole des universités invoquent les grands changements de société pour souligner combien l'enseignement postsecondaire est devenu indispensable, tout en se montrant réticents à revoir leurs méthodes et leurs attitudes.

Il serait peut-être bon de mentionner ici quelques aspects du fonctionnement des universités qui semblent particulièrement gênants de ce point de vue, il y a:

- les difficultés que rencontrent souvent les étudiants qui veulent faire reconnaître dans un nouvel établissement leurs études antérieures, (et l'on ne parle pas ici de la question des crédits que l'on pourrait accorder à un étudiant qui aurait acquis certaines connaissances en dehors d'un système éducatif reconnu). Ceci est un grave problème pour bon nombre d'étudiants canadiens qui changent d'université, ainsi que pour les immigrants qui s'installent au Canada. En fait, il arrive même que certaines facultés et certains programmes hésitent à reconnaître des cours offerts dans d'autres facultés ou programmes de leur propre établissement.

- l'insistance avec laquelle on veut maintenir la qualité des programmes à l'aide de procédures d'admission plutôt que par des techniques pédagogiques appropriées et des services de soutien. D'une façon générale, les établissements postsecondaires se sont montrés récalcitrants étudier ce qu'ils pourraient faire pour permettre à ceux qui n'ont pas reçu la préparation prévue d'entrer à l'université et de réussir grâce un encadrement pédagogique et à des services d'aide plus efficaces, malgré la preuve apportée par D. Unruh en 1986 que bien des choses pourraient être faites en ce sens si seulement on le voulait. Cette insistance pour conserver ces normes d'admission a fait dire à un observateur que c'était comme si les hôpitaux disaient qu'ils ne voulaient soigner que les bien-portants, les malades exigeant trop de soins et n'offrant pas de garantie que leur état va s'améliorer.
- la lenteur à s'ajuster aux changements démographiques tant par rapport aux étudiants inscrits qu'à ceux qui pourraient s'inscrire. Encore maintenant, on ne peut pas suivre n'importe quel programme à temps partiel, et les cours organisés ailleurs que sur le campus universitaire restent relativement rares. On répond aux besoins spécifiques des minorités, des adultes qui travaillent, des femmes qui retournent sur le marché du travail et d'autres groupes en créant des programmes "spéciaux," et l'on continue à enseigner les mêmes choses et suivre les procédures habituelles, sans changement ou presque, dans la majorité des autres cours.

On pourrait continuer encore longtemps, mais notre but n'est pas de dénigrer l'enseignement supérieur. Ces exemples servent plutôt montrer qu'il existe des attitudes et des habitudes qui font trop de mal à la cause de l'enseignement postsecondaire pour qu'elles puissent être compensées par de bonnes campagnes de relations publiques.

Ces commentaires ne visent pas non plus à suggérer que les gouvernements ont toujours raison. Nous savons tous combien les gouvernements peuvent se tromper. Ils agissent sous d'énormes pressions et souvent dans un minimum de temps et avec un minimum d'informations. Il est dans leur nature même d'avoir à prendre des décisions, quelquefois sur des questions vitales et très complexes, dans un espace de temps très court. Ils ont rarement la chance d'analyser les questions qui leur sont soumises avec le soin et l'impartialité qu'elles requièrent. Il faut souvent que les gouvernements tentent de concilier les contraires et de réunir des points de vue qui s'opposent, ou, du moins de choisir de faire ce qui offensera le moins de gens possible (B. Levin, 1986). Même si certaines universités pourraient être tentées de se moquer de cette façon plutôt lâche de prendre des décisions qui ont des répercussions sur le public, elles feraient peut-être bien de se souvenir que cette méthode est le produit d'une société fondée sur le pluralisme, l'ouverture d'esprit et la démocratie. De même que nous demandons aux gouvernements de comprendre que certaines façons de faire des universités sont "dans la nature des choses," nous devons accepter de reconnaître qu'il en est de même de certaines des caractéristiques gouvernementales les moins plaisantes.

Ces remarques nous amènent directement à la question de l'autonomie des universités. Les gouvernements ont toujours bien respecté la liberté intellectuelle des professeurs d'université. L'idée que ceux-cl' doivent être libres d'étudier ce qu'ils souhaitent et d'enseigner ce que leur conscience leur dicte n'est pas remise en question.

Toutefois, de là à la question de l'autonomie des universités en tant qu'institutions, il y a un grand pas, surtout lorsqu'on considère que ces établissements dépendent largement des fonds publics. Comme l'a dit le président de l'université York, Harry Arthurs:

> Les discussions qui consistent à demander si les gouvernements sont habilités intervenir dans le fonctionnement des universités ne sont souvent rien d'autre que l'expression d'un désaccord relatif au bien-fondé ou l'équité de certaines décisions gouvernementales . . . l'intervention du gouvernement est inévitable à partir du moment où on accepte qu'il finance les universités. (H. Arthurs, 1987 pp. 12-14)

Ceci ne veut pas dire que les gouvernements ont l'intention de diriger les universités et de leur dire quoi faire. En fait, au Canada, les gouvernements ont toujours hésité à imposer une certaine orientation aux universités, en partie parce qu'ils respectent leurs traditions et leur autonomie, mais aussi parce qu'ils croient que le fait de prendre des décisions l'échelle locale peut être très bénéfique. Toutefois, il semble qu' l'heure actuelle, les gouvernements exercent une influence accrue sur l'université, d'abord en finançant certains programmes de préférence à d'autres, mais aussi en laborant certains règlements qui devraient permettre de répondre des objectifs particuliers; malgré tout, la plus grande partie de l'aide aux universités canadiennes se fait encore par des subventions globales et non soumises des conditions particulières. Un appel à l'autonomie fondé sur l'idée qu'elle représente, dans son essence même, une vertu, a peu de chances d'être efficace, surtout à un moment où l'autonomie peut être vue comme une façon de masquer le manque de bonne volonté du milieu universitaire face à une révision de ses règlements et de ses méthodes. À moins que l'autonomie ne montre qu'elle produit de bons résultats (et nous sommes bien conscients de l'ambiguïté que peuvent créer ces termes), tout laisse croire qu'elle jouera un rôle de moins en moins grand dans les relations entre les gouvernements et les universités. S'il est peu probable que les gouvernements du Canada exigent le changement d'un grand nombre d'aspects de l'organisation des universités, il ne fait aucun doute qu'ils continueront à faire pression sur elles au moyen de programmes et de financement.

Toutes ces tensions et toutes ces difficultés ne rendent pas moins évidente une vérité essentielle: les gouvernements et les universités sont inexorablement liés les uns aux autres. Les universités sont devenues des organismes fondamentaux pour répondre à certains objectifs d'une grande importance sociale. En fait, ces objectifs sont si importants qu'ils exigent un soutien solide, non seulement financier mais aussi légal, au moyen de programmes gouvernementaux. (Parmi les questions souvent omises dans les discussions qui portent sur les relations entre les gouvernements et les universités, il faut signaler celle du rôle que la loi leur reconnaît, à savoir qu'elles sont habilitées délivrer des diplômes et former des spécialistes. Voir à ce propos M. Skolnik, 1987).

Alors, les questions qu'il faut poser sont les suivantes: comment les gouvernements et les universités peuvent-ils cohabiter, et comment doivent-ils s'y prendre pour travailler ensemble et obtenir de meilleurs résultats? Comment les tensions qui naîtront inévitablement de leurs relations pourront-elles être utilisées de façon à aboutir des réalisations aussi positives que possible? S'il n'existe pas de solution miracle, nous aimerions, en guise de conclusion, proposer une orientation générale.

En premier lieu, nous aimerions que chaque partie réexamine ses positions, et sa façon de considérer l'autre partie. Les méthodes et les moyens employés doivent être repensés dans les deux cas à la lumière de la situation actuelle, non pas seulement avec l'intention de mieux faire valoir son point de vue, mais aussi afin qu'il en sorte une compréhension profonde pour chacune des parties de la réalité à laquelle l'autre doit faire face. On peut penser en effet que l'attitude des deux parties, fondée sur des idées toutes faites, ou peut-être sur une accumulation de principes plutôt que sur des arguments minutieusement repensés, n'est peut-être pas celle qui conviendrait le mieux aujourd'hui.

Deuximement, comme il faut s'attendre à ce que les ressources continuent à être limitées, il faudra bien orienter la discussion sur les vrais problèmes, et choisir chaque fois que c'est possible, de collaborer efficacement plutôt que de s'opposer ou de s'attaquer les uns les autres. Sans doute les universités doivent-elles défendre leurs valeurs fondamentales, et l'on peut compter sur les gouvernements pour faire la même chose de leur côté. Toutefois, on ne saurait aller nulle part en se critiquant mutuellement et en se plaignant sans cesse. Il serait par contre bien plus utile de négocier davantage, de faire des tentatives conjointes et de concentrer ses efforts sur ce qui peut être fait plutôt que de se perdre dans ce qui est impossible (T. Morrison, 1986).

Les moyens grâce auxquels on pourrait changer la situation actuelle et établir ce type de relations n'existent pas encore. Il va falloir les inventer, ou les créer partir des systèmes ou des types d'organisation actuels. Un tel changement exigera créativité, courage et bonne volonté. Ça ne sera pas facile, mais c'est absolument essentiel.

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